

Algeria D 0.50	Greece D 4.00	Norway NK 16
Austria S 1.20	Hungary F 2.20	Oman CR 1.00
Bahrain D 0.86	Iceland IK 185	Poland Z 2.20
Belgium BF 66	India R 1.00	Portugal S 2.00
Canada C 2.25	Israel NS 9.50	Romania R 2.50
Chad D 1.00	Jordan JD 1.25	Saudi Arabia R 1.00
Czech Republic KC50	Korea KSH 150	Slovenia S 1.20
Denmark D 1.50	Kuwait KD 1.00	Spain P 2.20
Dubai D 8.50	Latvia LV 2	Sweden SK 1
Egypt E 8.50	Lithuania LT 2.00	Switzerland SF 2.00
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Germany DM 3.50	Malta M 2.70	Thailand TH 1.50
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NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR 46.677

Duncan Campbell interviews Freddie Foreman

Media Pulp publisher John Blake storms Frankfurt

Sport Favourite storms home in the Arc de Triomphe

Managing Director of British crime



G2 with European weather

G2 pages 8/9

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The poisoning of politics

Doubts over effectiveness of Downey's investigation

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

CONCERN was mounting last night that the Parliamentary Commission on the Environment, Sir Gordon Downey, will not have the resources to carry out a thorough and effective investigation into the Neil Hamilton-Ian Greer cash for questions affair.

John Major attempted to defuse the issue yesterday by promising a speedy inquiry, saying it could be completed within weeks. He also promised it would be made public.

But Sir Gordon, worried about the amount of paperwork, the number of witnesses to be called and his lack of staff, dismissed the Prime Minister's timescale as "unrealistic".

The row threatens to overshadow this week's Conservative conference in Bournemouth, which opens tomorrow. Mr Major, who also had to contend with opinion polls yesterday showing Labour's lead widening, had been hoping to use the confidence as a launchpad for the long months of electioneering that lie ahead.

Mr Major, interviewed on the BBC's Frost programme, banged a table in exasperation, and rejected the idea of a tribunal of inquiry, saying it would take years rather than weeks. "I have said to Gordon Downey, this matter is poisoning British politics because of the way it is being slanted by people. I want it settled."

But, unlike the Conservative chairman, Brian Mawhinney, who last week reluctantly endorsed Neil Hamilton, the Tory MP at the centre of the affair, Mr Major distanced himself.

In addition to concern over whether Sir Gordon has adequate resources, Labour and the Liberal Democrats also expressed worry over his report having to be submitted to the Commons committee on standards and privileges, which has an in-built Conservative majority.

Labour's chief whip, Donald Dewar, said: "It is no



reflection on Sir Gordon Downey if the committee to which he has to answer is open to pressure. It may undermine his effectiveness.

climate that committee would not command confidence."

The affair took a new twist yesterday with publication of a memo written by David Willetts, then a government whip, suggesting connivance with the Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, then Tory chairman of the members' interests committee, to limit the damage when the Neil Hamilton affair surfaced two years ago.

According to the Sunday Times, Mr Willetts held a discussion with Sir Geoffrey and recorded it in a memo: "Said No 10 had got in a muddle. They claimed they had cleared Neil Hamilton but actually this was only on a complaint about remarks of his, not on the new allegations. He is now expecting to receive a formal complaint about Hamilton receiving money etc. He could A. argue now sub judice, and get committee to set aside or B. investigate it as quickly as possible, exploiting good Tory majority. We are inclined to go for A, but he wants our advice."

The inquiry that followed was so limited that Labour members walked out.

Speaking at his London home David Willetts implicitly conceded the authenticity of the memo. "All I would say is simply that the right way forward is for Sir Gordon Downey to look at all the papers. I am sure that is the right thing to do. I welcome that and really do not wish to add anything more."

Mr Willetts is said to be telling colleagues that a proper understanding of what happened will only be gained by examination of all the documents in the case and not simply one which - he insists - has been taken out of context.

Sir Geoffrey admitted he had spoken to Mr Willetts about the options for the inquiry, but denied being influenced by him or seeking his advice. "Mr Willetts did not try to influence me. A whip is entitled to ask me where we are in a case. But a whip is not entitled to say: 'This is what we advise.'"

Tories' tangled web, pages 2-3; Leader comment and Letters, page 8; Down and dirty, page 9



John Major tried to defuse sleaze scandal in David Frost interview PHOTOGRAPH BY GARRY WEBBER

'If it is being suggested that the matter could be disposed of in two or three weeks, I think that is likely to prove unrealistic.'

Sir Gordon Downey

'It doesn't matter how good the person is if the procedures have in the past been tainted and we are to use the same procedures again.'

Paddy Ashdown

'This matter is poisoning British politics, because of the way it is being slanted by people. I want it settled, I want it settled quickly.'

John Major

Two killed by missile as Nordic biker feud grows

Jon Henley in Helsinki

TWO people were killed and 17 injured when a shoulder-fired anti-tank missile was launched into an all-night party at the Copenhagen headquarters of the Hell's Angels early yesterday.

It was the bloodiest incident in an increasingly vicious feud between rival motorbike gangs across Scandinavia, and police in Denmark were preparing for reprisals.

Police named the victims at the Hell's Angels annual Viking Farty as Louis Nielsen, aged 38, a candidate for Hell's Angels membership and Janne Krohn, aged 29, a woman guest.

The assault, which came days after the Danish parliament promised to rush through legislation against the warring gangs, brought the death toll from more than two years of car bombings, shootings and grenade

attacks across the normally placid Nordic region to nine, with at least 45 people wounded.

Police, who were patrolling outside the walled and fortified base shortly before the attack, admitted they were fighting a losing battle against the Hell's Angels and Bandidos gangs, whom they suspect are vying for control of drug and prostitution rackets in Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Finland.

"We've been on a very high level of security for nearly a year," said a Copenhagen police superintendent, Flemming Munch. "If they're determined to massacre each other, there's not much anyone can do to stop them."

The missile was apparently one of a batch of 12 stolen from an army depot in Sweden two years ago. It was fired into the back of the clubhouse from a rooftop about 70 yards from the Hell's Angels com-

pound, where some 300 people - including foreign members and local residents - were partying.

Mr Munch refused to confirm reports that one of the dead was the Danish Hell's Angels president, Christian Middelboe, but Mr Middelboe was injured, police said. Three people were seriously hurt by shrapnel, and others were badly burned.

Three similar attacks have been launched on Hell's Angels clubhouses in Sweden in the past two weeks, including one in Malmo last Thursday which injured four people.

Danish police yesterday raided several Bandido properties, but made only two arrests, neither connected with the missile blast. Police were also checking passengers leaving by ferry and air.

But Mr Munch said rapid progress was unlikely. "These gangs want to settle things their own way. They refuse to talk," he said.

Thousands face Gulf war pesticide tests

David Fairhall, Defence Correspondent

THOUSANDS of servicemen and women may face medical checks as the Ministry of Defence launches an inquiry into reports that British troops were exposed to pesticides during the Gulf war because they were not given protective clothing.

One senior officer admitted yesterday that the army's "can do" philosophy may have got out of hand, with junior ranks simply being told to "get on with it".

The MoD admitted last week that far more potentially dangerous organophosphate insecticides (OPs) were used in the desert than had been realised, and that this was almost certainly one cause of the mysterious "Gulf war syndrome" for which veterans are demanding treatment and compensation.

But the Defence Secretary, Michael Portillo, still refuses

to confirm the existence of such a syndrome. "We have set up the most comprehensive medical investigation firstly to see whether Gulf war veterans are more ill - in greater numbers, greater proportions - than the population as a whole, and, if they are, if there is one linking theme," he said yesterday.

Mr Portillo admitted that "certain pesticides" were used, adding: "I would hope that whatever precautions were appropriate were taken."

Documents disclosed at the weekend by Labour's defence spokesman, Dr David Clark, indicate that dangers were increased by lack of equipment.

In one report, Sergeant Anthony Worthington of the 4th Armoured Brigade, says he repeatedly raised the matter with senior officers, but to no effect. "At no time was personal protective equipment issued to personnel applying insecticide," he wrote. Other veterans told Richard Barr, a solicitor who is representing several hundred of them in

claims against the MoD, that liquid insecticide was sprayed on tents while men were eating meals inside.

Hilary Meredith, another solicitor representing ill veterans, said: "Many could not read the instructions on the pesticides purchased from the Saudis. They were mixed incorrectly and they were very strong."

Organophosphate pesticides were developed in Germany during the 1930s and were the precursors of military nerve gases. Some OPs are still commonly used as insecticides, but the dangers of using them in concentrated form, especially when inhaled, are now widely recognised.

Last week's revelations by the MoD were prompted partly by the realisation by the Armed Forces Minister, Nicholas Soames, that his department had misled the Commons defence committee in December 1994 by stating that only one OP (malathion) had been used - to delouse Iraqi prisoners.

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TORIES' TANGLED WEB

Daunting task of sifting a mountain of papers

Tory-dominated committee will have absolute power after commissioner has reported on evidence

The task facing Sir Gordon Downey

David Hencke on the limits parliamentary procedure can put on what is made public

Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, must sift through the mountain of evidence on the "cash for questions" scandal. It was clear yesterday that John Major's suggested two-to-three-week deadline for the completion of Sir Gordon's inquiry is an impossible target.

Major could not compel Parliament to publish it, as MPs on the committee decided that. Sir Gordon said yesterday he was able to start the inquiry as soon as he received the evidence. He admitted the large number of documents meant he had a problem with resources and time. Sir Gordon is due to receive 45 large binders full of evidence from the Guardian. He will also get a mountain of papers from Mohamed Al Fayed; easily double the 150 pages of evidence released from the Government and evidence from the former minister Neil Hamilton and the lobbyist Ian Greer.



Dale Campbell-Savours: 'Committee should meet in public'



David Willetts: said committee had 'good Tory majority'

Committee members and the argument for a tribunal

- Tony Newton, chairman: Leader of the House of Commons. One of the longest serving members of Lady Thatcher's and John Major's governments. Chaired previous Privileges Committee supporting hearings in secret.
Ann Taylor: Shadow Leader of the Commons. Long-serving member of the shadow Cabinet. Previously held directorship with one lobbying company, Westminster Communications.
Dale Campbell-Savours: Labour MP for Worthington. One of the longest serving MPs with an interest in parliamentary procedures. Asked questions which led to Ian Greer admitting he had paid Sir Michael Grylls, chairman of the Tory backbench Trade and Industry Committee.
Gavin Davies: Conservative MP for Stamford. Backbencher with strong views on parliamentary ethics. Closely questioned Sir Robin Butler, Cabinet Secretary, as a member of the Treasury and Civil Service Committee, over his handling of "cash for questions".
Iain Duncan-Smith: Conservative MP for Chingford. Up and coming rightwing Eurosceptic MP who has taken on Lord Tebbit's former seat. Known to be tough about declaring interests.
John Evans: Labour MP for St Helens. Stalwart old-style Labour MP.
Doug Hoyle: Labour MP for Warrington North. Chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party. His agent accepted £500 towards his election fund in 1987.
Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith: MP for Westliden. Former chairman of the Members' Interests Select Committee, which held inquiry into Neil Hamilton in 1984.
 Nigel Jones: Liberal MP for Cheltenham. Active constituency MP who won his seat in 1992. Not high profile on parliamentary matters.
Desea Jill Knight: Conservative MP for Birmingham, Edgbaston. Tory grandee. Takes strong view on sexual morality, but strongly partisan in her views on other matters.
Sir David Mitchell: Conservative MP for Hampshire North West. Tory grandee. Former transport minister. Neil Hamilton was his Parliamentary Private Secretary, in 1988 before he became a Whip.
Four government legal officers: Sir Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney General; Sir Derek Spencer, the Solicitor General; Lord Mackay, the Lord Advocate; and Paul Cullen QC, the Solicitor General for Scotland, may attend but not vote.

- Tribunal
- To be presided over by a judge assisted by two QCs
- Sit in public
- High-profile position as a court of law
- Clear evidence of wrongdoing and documents
- His powers of cross-examination
- Evidence is privileged and on oath
- Charges of the tribunal can be severely punished
The Commissioner
- Works part-time
- Has other business to attend to
- Has only two part-time staff
- Has no powers to subpoena witnesses or documents
- Has no powers of cross-examination
Committee
- Is chaired by a Cabinet minister
- Has built-in Tory majority
- Has discretion over whether to publish commissioner's report
- Has discretion to hold further inquiry, in public or private
- Can refuse to take any action at all on a case of business.



The Guardian's front page, last Saturday

"In a memo to fellow whips, Willetts records the conversation [with Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith]. The memo says: 'Said No 10 had got in a muddle. They claimed they had cleared Neil Hamilton but actually this was only on a complaint about remarks of his, not on the new allegations. He is now expecting to receive a formal complaint about Hamilton receiving money etc. He could: A, argue now sub judice and get committee to set it aside or B, investigate it as quickly as possible, exploiting good Tory majority. We are inclined to go for A, but he wants our advice.'"

The Sunday Times yesterday

Why John Major is not keen on a tribunal of inquiry to deal with the cash for questions scandal

THE setting up of a tribunal of inquiry into the "cash for questions" scandal has an honourable precedent - dating back 85 years to 1912. Then a Parliamentary select committee under Lord Asquith's government used its built-in Liberal majority to protect ministers from hostile findings about gambling with shares in the Marconi company. MPs voted by nine to six to whitewash the report. In 1921 when a MP accused a Ministry of Defence official of shredding munitions documents to prevent an inquiry by the Exchequer and Audit Department - the forerunner of the National Audit Office - a bill was passed by Parliament setting up tribunals of inquiry. The reason was that the government could not trust the same tactics to cover-up the facts.

1971 and the Crown Agents fiasco which reported in 1982. The Crown Agents inquiry followed an injection of £175 million of taxpayers' money to prevent the agency which acts for overseas governments from going bankrupt. The inquiry found that ministers - notably Dame Judith Hart, who was in charge of overseas development at the time of the fiasco. In the late 1960s, should have asked more questions. Since then the use of tribunals of inquiry has been phased out. Lady Thatcher, who also disliked royal commissions into social problems, was also strongly against tribunals of inquiry because of the time the hearings took. John Major yesterday was taking a similar line. On Breakfast with Frost on BBC1, Mr Major rejected calls for the matter to go to a tribu-

PM shares Lady Thatcher's dislike of tribunals: 'It would be kicking it into the long grass'

A tribunal of inquiry runs on completely different lines to a Parliamentary select committee. It is much closer to a court of law. It is set up by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament and is usually presided over by a judge, assisted by two QCs. It has similar powers to a court of law, such as summoning witnesses; evidence is privileged and on oath, and documents can be demanded. Contempt of the tribunal can be severely punished - two journalists were once jailed for refusing to provide information to an inquiry. It can hold an inquiry into any matter "of urgent public importance". Usually inquiries are concerned with misconduct of ministers, civil servants, public corporations, the administration of justice and the conduct of the police. During the 1920s the system was used by the Home Secretary to investigate three police forces, and in the 1930s an investigation into a budget leak found that the colonial secretary had passed on information which was used for financial gain by businessmen. In 1948 a more widespread inquiry was held by Mr Justice Lysaght into corruption in government departments. The biggest inquiries in the 1960s included the Vassall spy case and the Aberfan disaster in south Wales. During the 1970's and 1980's tribunals of inquiry were used to investigate large corporate collapses, the two most famous being the investigation into the Department of Trade's handling of the collapse of the Vehicle and General insurance company in 1971.

GEOFFREY JOHNSON SMITH

A former media man with a dislike of publicity



The appendage "grandee" has been freely attached by journalists to Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, chairman of the select committee on members' interests, writes Ewen MacAskill. In fact, his early career was not in the City or landed estates but as a

BBC interviewer-reporter. Despite his media background, Sir Geoffrey, aged 72, has become enough of an old school Tory not to welcome publicity, and certainly not the kind associated with suggestions of backroom deals with the Government. More

than most parliamentary committees, the select committee of members' interests has to be seen to be completely above board, because it deals with ethics. An early Labour supporter, he fought an election under the Conservative banner in 1955, becoming MP for Holborn and St Pancras in 1959. He shifted further rightwards in the following years, moving through Edward Heath to a knighthood under Margaret Thatcher. He joined the select committee in 1976 and became chairman three years later. In 1984, he clashed with Labour MPs Dale Campbell-Savours and Brian Sedgmore, who wanted to complain about Mrs Thatcher's alleged undisclosed involvement in the Omani arms contract through her son Mark.

DAVID WILLETTS

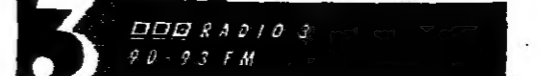
'Two Brains' a high flier in party where it is not done to be too bright

DAVID Willetts is rare among Conservative MPs, an intellectual who does not attempt to hide his cleverness writes Ewen MacAskill. In a parliamentary group in which some members take pride in being labelled "the stupid party", it is not

the done thing to be seen as too bright. Mr Willetts, even before he became an MP in 1992, was a frequent sight around Westminster, wandering around with a rowdy, a bit of a loner, animated only when engaged in discussion over ideas rather than gossip. His academic record and large number of think-tank pamphlets have earned him the nickname among colleagues of "Two Brains". But his reputation as a high flier will have to be reassessed because of the turbulence over the memo row. His part in the Hamilton sleaze inquiry may in the end be dismissed by his colleagues as him just doing his job, the normal role of a Conservative whip. They may consider him just unlucky to be caught up in the publicity. Until now, his promotion had been fast. He was quickly taken into the whips' office, the usual training ground before moving on to a ministerial post. Aged only 40, he has risen to Paymaster General. The MP for Havant was educated at King Edward's, Birmingham, and Oxford, where he took a first in PPE. He worked at the Treasury before moving in 1984 to Downing Street on secondment. Two years later, he left the Civil Service to become director of the Centre for Policy Studies. There was chatter about the speed with which he switched from loyalty to Mrs Thatcher to John Major but that apart, his rise had been smooth.

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Labour p... out claim... We were... given all... informati... should h... available... Gree... David Pallister... Owen Bow... Lobby f... DIRECTORS... PM urge... MAJOR INTERVIEW... Parliament's... interest, this... needs to be... determined... and quick...



TORIES' TANGLED WEB:

Instability haunts those in Hamilton affair

Labour pair walk out claiming: 'We were not given all the information that should have been available to us'



Career in the balance... Lobbyist Ian Greer who is reported to be ready to hand over his firm to his associates, and right, the London headquarters of IGA



Greer set to stand down as directors quit

David Pallister, David Hencke and Owen Bowcott report on the political lobbyist's future

THE future of Ian Greer as a political lobbyist hung in the balance last night after two of his directors resigned...

Labour Party members accused Mr Greer of withholding information concerning the scandal from them and other directors.

Allan Roberts, late Labour MP for Bootle. He assisted Chris Smith, Labour MP for Islington South and Finsbury, during the 1992 election.



Ian Greer's home at Kingston in south west London

should have been available to them. Mr MacDuff said he has been employed by IGA since 1988 and was one of the first

Mr Greer's decision to consider his future was made at a crisis meeting of executives on Friday, after another director, Baroness Turner of Camden, was forced to quit the Labour front bench in the Lords for publicly declaring her continuing support for him.

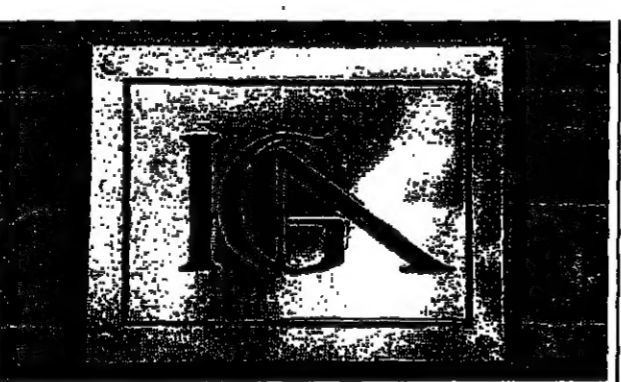
Yesterday, Mr Greer and his senior partners met at the Berkeley Hotel in London where he was expected formally to declare that he was prepared to stand down and hand over the business.

inevitable by many MPs. Dale Campbell-Savours, the Labour member for Worthing, said: "Ian Greer was the company and its name has been completely discredited. I can't see it retaining any clients. Any MP who is approached by a member of IGA on behalf of clients is going to be very wary of entering into any relationship."

he could do now is to spill the beans and tell us everything that went on. One of IGA's newest clients, the National Union of Teachers, said yesterday it was reviewing its relationship with the company.

Lobby firm spans party divide

IGA DIRECTORS



Traditional Tories rub shoulders with former trade union officials

IGA companies and their directors. IGA (Holdings) Ltd. Ian Greer. Andrew Smith, aged 34. Group managing director, joined the company at the age of 19 in 1984.

Ian Mablin, Accountant, partner in William Wright & Co which provided the firm with accountancy services.

ing Street as a junior adviser to Margaret Thatcher. Jeremy Sweeney, aged 33. Succeeded to help the campaign of Graham Bright in the 1992 election in Luton South.

PM urges Downey to publish report

MAJOR INTERVIEW

'In Parliament's interest, this needs to be determined and quickly'

Extracts from the Prime Minister's interview yesterday on BBC's Breakfast with Frost programme. John Major: I think cash for questions is unacceptable...

If the Government were concerned about perverting the natural course of justice, why did I help steer a Bill through the House of Commons so that Neil Hamilton could take his case to court, and all the documentation could be publicly exposed.

JM: Well it's for Gordon Downey. I don't know how large the paperwork is. I don't know how much he's got to do. I don't know how much time he can give to it, but if he could have finished it in two or three weeks I would welcome that.

DF: And by quickly you would hope that it's published before the next election? JM: Absolutely. DF: A matter weeks rather than months?

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Monday October 7 1996 Guardian of Parliament Neil Hamilton but only on a remarks of his, legations. He is receive a formal Hamilton etc. He could: A dice and get B, quickly as ng good Tory inclined to go for ur advice. Key Times yesterday vney ris not keen on: ry to deal with stions scanda PM shares: Thatche's back of trouble: would be kept into the long grass

250,000 claimants to lose out as Portillo-inspired brave new world comes into force in biggest shake-up of the system since 1948

Thousands hit by dole upheaval

Seumas Milne
Labour Editor

The changes

THE introduction of the job seeker's allowance, which today replaces unemployment benefit and income support for the unemployed, marks the biggest change to the dole system since 1948 and will deliver sharp cuts in benefits to hundreds of thousands of claimants.

The key change is the halving of entitlement to unemployment benefit — paid regardless of savings or partner's income — from 12 to six months. From today, everyone who signed on as unemployed at the beginning of April and is still out of work will be switched to a means-tested benefit.

That is to be known as "income-based JSA", instead of income support. An estimated 250,000 claimants, with savings of over £3,000 or a working partner, will now lose all or some of their dole money after six months.

The halving of the period of entitlement — a reversion to the pre-war arrangements — is only one of a panoply of dole cuts and penalties introduced as part of the JSA, a legacy of Michael Portillo's period as Employment Secretary. Together they represent a rapid acceleration to a compulsory workfare system.

The job seeker's allowance:

- replaces unemployment benefit and income support
- halves non-means tested, contributory benefit from 12 to six months
- cuts contributory benefit for 18-24-year-olds by 20 per cent
- slashes contributory benefit for those with non-working partners
- introduces powers to make claimants take low-paid jobs
- reduces the hours the long-term unemployed can study from 21 to 16 a week
- ends the link between unemployment benefit and inflation
- brings 250,000 disabled people under "availability for work" tests
- cuts availability of hardship payments
- reduces benefit for childless couples
- lengthens time before dole payments are made

The Government presents the JSA as an attempt to streamline unemployment benefits and their delivery at JobCentres and a way of securing "better value for the taxpayer by more effective targeting of resources".

Labour and the Liberal Democrats have denounced the JSA as a "savage increase in means-testing", but only the Lib Dems are now committed to abolishing it. Chris

Smith, Labour's social security spokesman, fought unsuccessfully to keep the commitment to restore a 12-month unemployment benefit and Labour says it will now only "review" the JSA.

The bureaucratic upheaval caused by the JSA has cost the Government at least £320 million and led to a series of strikes by Employment Service workers over lack of physical protection. It is eventually expected to save £240 million a year.

Among other changes introduced as part of the JSA:

- Around 45,000 18 to 24-year-olds currently able to claim contributory unemployment benefit will have their dole cut even during their first six months out of work.
- Unlike unemployment benefit, the new replacement "contribution-based" JSA will not be uprated with inflation and claimants with adult dependants will no longer be entitled to the current supplement, worth up to £70 a week.
- A quarter of a million people, currently claiming invalidity benefit, will have to claim JSA because they are not disabled enough to qualify for the new incapacity benefit. There are fears many will fall the JSA's toughened "availability for work" test.

Underlying all the benefit cuts are a range of new powers to compel the unemployed to take low-paid work or join government schemes.



Going without... Dave Morton, who will lose his income support benefit due to the Government's Job Seekers Allowance

PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL DODD

Former bakery worker considers himself 'lucky' despite a jobless year to have qualified for benefits that will disappear under changes

Mark Varley

FORMER bakery worker Dave Morton has been unemployed for almost a year, but still considers himself lucky. Ever since he signed on after his employers sacked him in a "cost-cutting exercise", he has been eligible for a weekly dole of just over £48.

But if he had met the same fate under the Job-seeker's Allowance (JSA) regime that comes in today,

he would no longer be entitled to automatic unemployment benefit.

After six months he would have been switched to means-tested "income-based" JSA. And, because he was given a £12,000 pay-off from his job, he would not have qualified for any money then, unless he had spent at least £4,000 of his redundancy money.

Under the new rules anyone with £3,000 or more savings, or a partner in full-time work, will receive nothing after six months.

Mr Morton, aged 46, said the change will mean people having a choice between spending their redundancy money quickly or not qualifying for benefits.

"You've got to spend on certain things as well, otherwise they'll query you and won't allow the spending to count. If you get £10,000, you'll have to get rid of three-quarters of it just to qualify for full benefits."

Mr Morton, unmarried and from Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, counts himself lucky in another way, too: he is not young enough to see his weekly payments drop by 20 per cent, a change applying to under-25s previously entitled to unemployment benefit.

But he knows he cannot

escape other changes which apply from today: the job-seeker's agreement. It stipulates he attends certain interviews, is available for work, and applies for jobs suggested by advice workers.

He said: "It's going to be up to the person who sees you and decides if you're looking hard enough for a job. But, as anyone who has been unemployed for a long time will tell you, most people are trying their utmost to get jobs and meet the hills."

The pressure may even result in the violence feared by staff at benefits offices under the JSA regime, he added. "I can see it happening with some of them who are signing on and being told they're not doing well enough."

Youngsters face losing homes

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

THOUSANDS of jobless young people will lose their homes as a result of housing benefit curbs which take effect today, welfare groups are warning.

An estimated 135,000 claimants will be affected by the curbs, which will restrict housing benefit payments for single people aged 16-24 to the average cost of shared accommodation in the area.

This means that a single person renting a flat, or sharing a relatively expensive house, will not be able to claim the full cost. If they lose

their job, they will have 13 weeks to move.

The clampdown is part of the drive by Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, to cut the £9 billion-a-year housing benefit bill.

When he announced the change in the last Budget, Mr Lilley said: "Housing benefit should not provide an incentive for young people to leave the parental home unnecessarily, or to take on high-priced accommodation at the taxpayer's expense."

The maximum benefit payable to single young people will be determined by local rent officers. They will set a figure at the mid-point between the highest and lowest

rents available in the area for a room in a house with shared use of kitchen and bathroom.

The limit will also apply to claimants who move, and at the next review of their claim — to all those who have entered accommodation since January 2.

Centrepoint, the youth homelessness charity, is calling on ministers to think again or at least review the curbs after six months. It warns that it is far from clear that sufficient shared accommodation is available for young people.

The charity says that in Torbay, there are 1,121 young people on housing benefit in

the private rented sector but only 221 units of accommodation costing less than the proposed local rent limit.

In Brent, north London, the proposed limit is £40 a week. But a survey by the London Research Centre, cited by Centrepoint, says the average rent for a bedsit or room in the borough last year was £60.89.

Crisis, another charity working with the homeless, predicts the impact of the curbs will be "devastating".

It says that in areas of high unemployment, most young people leave home not to take advantage of housing benefit, but to escape high levels of family conflict.

Roads sacrificed in quest for tax cuts

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

A CUT in road spending of 20 per cent — more than £200 million — is to be forced on the Department of Transport by the Treasury as the soft option towards securing tax cuts in the Chancellor's last Budget before the general election.

The Transport Secretary, Sir George Young, is strongly resisting the plan because the roads programme has had to bear cuts of almost 40 per cent — around £500 million — in the past two years. In this month's opening round of public expenditure talks, the

Treasury has been told that spending on new roads is down to a trickle.

But with the election looming the DoT is the sacrificial lamb. It is already committed to funding railway privatisation and is opposing spending cuts on an already cash-starved industry.

The road budget for the current year is £1.8 billion, some of which is being spent on minor improvements to trunk roads. A sign of the Government's tougher stance on roads came yesterday when the Highways Agency conceded that its programme was reduced to three projects, after a further three were frozen last week to save cash.

Two tendering periods for the M11 link road along the A12 in Hackney, east London, have been extended until after the Budget speech next month, when the agency will be able to assess whether it has funds for the work.

Under DoT pressure the agency has also decided that it cannot go ahead with £109 million improvements on the A40 London-Oxford road between East Acton and Hangar Lane, west London.

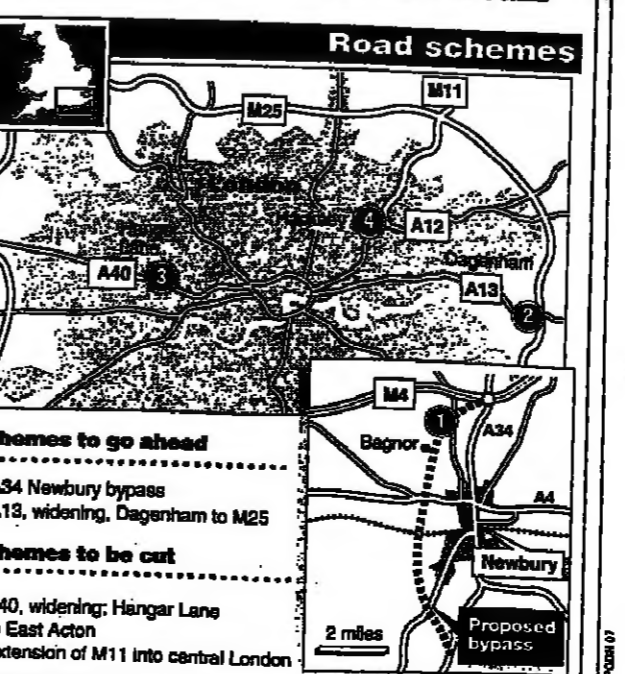
Houses on either side of the road have been demolished, but the project is now being

offered to the private sector, which will complete it with government help. This is expected to delay it for a year.

The three projects to go ahead are the Newbury bypass and two schemes to improve the A13 between London and Tilbury.

The agency has had to abandon its much-vaunted £20 million scheme to replace all primary route signs over the next three years with signs easier to understand.

The agency said it hoped to revive it "if and when funds become available".



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Haider puts a mine under Vienna's socialist bastion

The city's monument to leftwing hegemony is falling to the far right
Report: Ian Traynor. Main picture: David Sillitoe



Vranitzky: Faces big losses



Haider: Playing on fears

IN THE city which proudly boasts the highest proportion of public housing of any west European capital, there is no stronger symbol of "Red Vienna" than the Karl Marx-Hof. The vast expressionist bastion (above) in the north of the city was built in the Twenties, one of the continent's most ambitious urban housing projects for the poor. A few years later it became a battlefield as the socialists vainly fought to defend it against the artillery onslaught of rightwing "Austro-fascist" paramilitaries. Now the working-class tenants of the 1,400 flats, which were modernised a couple of years ago at the cost of \$23 million, are being wooed by the new "yuppie-fascist" Austrian

right, led by the telegenic Jörg Haider. This time, without a shot being fired, the Karl Marx-Hof may fall. "I've always voted socialist," said Franz, a market worker who lives in the block. "But this time it's a big question mark. This government is all promises and nothing else." In next Sunday's elections to the Vienna council and the European Parliament, Chancellor Franz Vranitzky's Social Democrats (formerly Socialists) look certain to suffer substantial losses, while Mr Haider's Freedom Party, the most popular far-right party in the West, chalks up more gains. Opinion polls suggest that the Social Democrats will lose absolute control of the city for

the first time in its democratic history, and that there will be a sizeable anti-EU vote, two years after two out of three Austrians said yes to membership and 20 years after Mr Vranitzky took the country into the union. Franz, who is 55 and declined to give his surname, did not say explicitly he was switching his vote to Mr Haider, but he effectively recited the Haider manifesto to explain what was bothering him. He wanted immigration stopped, Austria's net contributions to the EU budget reimbursed, and a crackdown on crime - in one of Europe's safest cities. "For too long we've only had Red politicians in Vienna," he said. "I've got nothing

against foreigners if they work, but they're exploiting our welfare state. And I've got nothing against (phone) bugging if it prevents crime. They can bug me, I've got nothing to hide." All of this is lifted from Mr Haider's skilful soundbites. Mr Haider's campaign promises to breaking "red monopoly rule" in the capital, rails against Maastricht and the proposed single European currency, and fans xenophobia. Playing on their diffuse, unarticulated fears, Mr Haider is warning Franz and his fellow tenants in Karl Marx-Hof that Turkish immigrants will steal their flats and that their savings will be wiped out by the single currency. "This is our city. It is not Istanbul," he told a weekend

rally. "If the drachma rubs up against the strong schilling, obviously the schilling will be weakened and your savings will be worth less." The result is that working-class and elderly Viennese are turning away in droves from their traditional party, the Social Democrats, towards Mr Haider's angry rightwingers. "This will be unprecedented in Vienna, the end of that other world where the Social Democrats always had a majority," said Peter Ullram, head of the Fesal polling institute. "Haider is scoring well with the poor and the pensioners on the issues of job losses and crime." He predicts that the Social Democrat vote will fall by

seven points, to about 40 per cent, in the city elections, and by perhaps a third, compared with the last general election, in the European poll. This is Austria's first European election. Mr Haider is scoring about 25 per cent in the opinion polls, almost three points up on last December. His big breakthrough with the working class came in the last Vienna elections, in 1991, when he tripled his vote and supplanted the (Christian Democrat) Austrian People's Party as the second force in the city. "I voted for EU membership in the referendum," Franz said. "But now we see it's a big tower of Babel and the whole thing could come tumbling down."

World news in brief

'Spy' arrest fuels tension in Korea

WASHINGTON was dragged further into escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula yesterday after North Korea said it had arrested a United States citizen spying for South Korea. A South Korean security official dismissed the charge as a fabrication, and the US embassy in the capital Seoul could not confirm details about the alleged agent. The Korean Central News Agency said Evan Carl Hunsicker was arrested on August 24 by a North Korean security organisation after he crossed the Amnok river on the Chinese border with North Korea. The KCNA did not give further details or explain why he had been held since late August. "He admitted he is a US citizen and that he illegally entered the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the purpose of getting information on its domestic situation," it said. The charge drags Washington deeper into a feud between the North and South over the deaths of 22 of 26 North Koreans who landed from a submarine in the South last month. Pyongyang wants the return of the vessel, along with survivors and the bodies of the dead crew. — *Reuters, Seoul.*

Papal plea for prayers

POPE JOHN PAUL asked the world's Roman Catholics to pray for him yesterday before he entered Rome's Gemelli hospital for surgery to remove his appendix. "In asking you to accompany me with your prayer, I send cordial greetings to those in hospitals and clinics, knowing I can count on their spiritual solidarity," he told tens of thousands of people in St Peter's Square at the end of a beatification ceremony. The Pope, who looked tired during the three-hour ceremony, has had major abdominal surgery three times since 1981. Some medical experts and Italian media have expressed scepticism about what the Vatican says is a recurrent inflammation of his appendix. He is likely to have the operation tomorrow. — *Reuters, Vatican City; John Hooper, page 9; The problem with John Paul, G2, pages 4-5.*

Belgian police search tunnel

BELGIAN police stepped up the search of an abandoned mine tunnel yesterday after the chief suspect in the country's paedophile scandal indicated something was hidden there. Engineers were brought in to pump water and mud from the partly flooded tunnel in the mine near the southern town of Jumet. Police officials said Marc Dutroux had given no indication of what they might find. Police denied they were searching for bodies, but Belgian television reported specialists in corpse identification at the scene. Dutroux, a convicted child-abuser, is accused of playing a leading role in a kidnapping and paedophile ring responsible for the deaths of at least four young girls. — *AP, Brussels.*

German fire test fans anger

EUROPEAN officials are likely to approve new regulations for the safety testing of building materials for flammability today, despite fears from firefighters that standards will be reduced. The meeting in Brussels of the European Commission's standing committee on construction is preparing to adopt fire tests used in Germany in an attempt to harmonise more than 60 different fire standards regulations across Europe. There are suggestions in Brussels that the Germans are trying to pressure other member states to accept the test because they do not want to change their own procedures. The move to accept the German standard is being made despite protests from Britain's Fire Brigades Union that the German tests are less satisfactory than those in place elsewhere. If approved, the new standard is likely to be enforced across Europe from 1999. — *Stephen Bates, Brussels.*

Children march for fresh air

ABOUT 400 children marched through the streets of Tehran yesterday demanding swift action to end air pollution in the Iranian capital. The children, aged six and seven, carried banners calling for people and the environment to be protected from pollution caused by factories and vehicles. "Life is good only under a blue sky. Elders, fathers, the smoke of your cars has made our lives black," said one placard. The march was sponsored by the Women's Campaign for Protecting the Environment and was licensed by the government. Many people in the city of 10 million complain of irritated eyes and breathing difficulties. — *AP, Tehran.*

Labour gain in New Zealand

New Zealand's Labour Party has closed the gap on the ruling National Party less than a week before a general election, according to a TVNZ opinion poll yesterday. The poll showed support for the National Party dropping six points to 34 per cent, Labour surged up six to 24 per cent. — *Reuters, Wellington.*

Gadafy deflates Turkish visitor

Chris Nuttall in Ankara

THE Turkish prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, came under fire at home again yesterday for trying to strengthen ties with the Muslim world. At the same time, the Libyan leader, Colonel Muammar Gadhafi, delivered a slap in the face to his efforts to improve "brotherly" relations. In a face-to-face meeting in the Libyan coastal town of Sirte, Col Gadhafi criticised Turkey's suppression of the Kurdish separatists in its southeast and its relations with the United States. "The state of Kurdistan should take its place in the spectrum of nations under the Middle Eastern sun," he said. "Turkey should not fight against people seeking their independence." Mr Erbakan was reported to be confused and shocked by the Libyan leader's remarks in front of about 50 Turkish journalists accompanying him on his controversial African tour. "We don't have a Kurdish problem, we have a terrorism problem," he said in an embarrassed response. Whatever the many differences between the prime minister's pro-Islamic Welfare Party and the other, secular, parties in the Turkish political system, all agree that the Kurdish separatist guerrillas of the PKK are terrorists and that Turkey's national unity and territorial integrity must be preserved at all costs. The Turkish opposition leader, Mesut Yilmaz, said yesterday that Mr Erbakan deserved everything he got for going to the Libyan leader despite criticism at home and abroad. "If a terrorist dictator can try to teach a great country like Turkey these kinds of lessons, then that's the fault of our prime minister," he said. Col Gadhafi went on to criticise Turkey's relations with its closest ally, the United

States: "Foreign powers have invaded Turkey, built bases on its soil and used those bases against Iraq," he said. "We oppose US bases in Turkey and membership in Nato." These comments were less of a problem for the prime minister, who had voiced similar angry complaints while in opposition. Since taking office in June as the first Islamist leader of modern Turkey, he has gone out of his way to show supporters that he is not unduly influenced by the United States. His first major foreign trip took him to Iran to seal an important natural gas deal in the same week that the US president, Bill Clinton, announced sanctions against those investing heavily in the energy industries of Iran and Libya. Countries he considers state sponsors of terrorism. Before the meeting with the Libyan leader, Mr Erbakan announced that trade should be tripled, with Turkey importing nearly \$1.3 billion worth of oil each year. Mr Erbakan was going on to visit Nigeria yesterday, another pariah in the eyes of the West because of its human rights record. He has spoken of improving relations with Cuba and was dissuaded by the Turkish foreign ministry from including Sudan on his African itinerary, another country listed as a state sponsor of terrorism by the Clinton administration. Turkey currently has a schizophrenic foreign policy, with the Welfare Party's coalition partner, the True Path Party (DYP), taking a traditional pro-Western line. The DYP leader and foreign minister, Tansu Ciller, has described the visit to Libya as ill-thought and the interior minister, Mehmet Agar, a DYP member, threatened to resign over the trip because of earlier derogatory remarks by Col Gadhafi about Turkey's handling of its Kurdish problem.

Lebed retreats from threat to Nato

The hard man from Moscow has softened his response to the alliance's expansion plans, John Palmer reports in Brussels

MOSCOW'S security chief, General Alexander Lebed, who last week spoke of a possible military response if Nato goes ahead with its planned expansion to central Europe, arrived at Nato headquarters in Brussels yesterday hinting at a more flexible Russian policy. Gen Lebed called for "a complicated but civilised dialogue" with Nato over European security. Speaking to journalists as he arrived for his first visit to a Western country, Gen Lebed - a potential successor to the ailing President Yeltsin - said he had brought with him some proposals for future relations with Nato. "Yes, there are some new proposals. But first of all they are for the ears of the Nato secretary-

general] Javier Solana," he said. Before he left Moscow, Interfax quoted an unnamed Russian security council official as saying: "A Lebed opposes Nato expansion and will inform the leadership of the alliance about possible negative consequences of such a step." In an interview with the German news magazine Der Spiegel, to be published today, Gen Lebed declared: "The threat supposedly posed by the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact five or 10 years ago no longer exists. But Nato formulates and realises its aims and tasks just as it did before." In Brussels yesterday Gen Lebed said "We will evaluate the situation from the point of view of Russia's interests and security."

But he said he had been misrepresented in Western reports that he had threatened Nato with a new deployment of Russia's "rusty" nuclear missiles if it admitted the Czech republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia. "Some commentators of ill-will have been saying that Lebed is threatening Nato with nuclear weapons and saying Russia is ready to occupy some of these countries if there is the slightest move of Nato to the east. These are the worst fairy tales of the Cold War," he said. Nato is attaching great importance to Gen Lebed's visit to its political and military headquarters as well as to the Western European Union, the defence arm of the EU. "During his visit to Nato

the general will be shown every aspect of the alliance and how it functions. He will see that we already have senior Russian generals liaising with Nato at our military headquarters in Mons," one Nato diplomat said. Nato has proposed a new "Russia/Nato Charter" to cover all aspects of a close European security partnership, in parallel with a limited enlargement to central Europe. Although President Yeltsin opposes any Nato enlargement, there have been signs that Moscow might accept some expansion if it did not involve stationing foreign troops or nuclear weapons closer to Russia's borders. Moscow is seeking guarantees that other countries anxious to join Nato - notably the Baltic states - will not be admitted without its consent. It also wants to establish a "partnership of equals" with Nato.

Bordeaux town hall bombed

Claude Canellas in Bordeaux

FRANCE'S prime minister, Alain Juppé, toured his bombed offices in the city of Bordeaux, where he is mayor, yesterday as investigators said Corsican separatists might be responsible. Hours after a device damaged the elegant 18th century town hall, blowing out windows but causing no casualties, Mr Juppé flew from Paris under heavy escort but refused to speculate on the culprits. Mr Juppé, who had left his south-western power base only four hours before the blast late on Saturday, picked his way through a mess of broken glass, wrecked antique furniture and paintings. The device went off at



Police investigators inside Bordeaux's town hall, where a bomb exploded on Saturday. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHEL LACROIX

11.41pm local time outside the hall, where Mr Juppé had met local officials on Saturday morning and where a Franco-British summit was due to take place next month. "I am not the kind of man who lets himself be intimidated. The rule of law will prevail," he told reporters, adding that he would meet interior and justice ministers today to discuss what measures should be taken. Wood panelling suffered from the blast, and the painted ceiling was cracked. French windows were blown

out, but a crystal chandelier escaped unharmed. The blast also damaged Juppé's own office. "I heard a huge explosion then saw a cloud of smoke in the sky," said a witness. The Bordeaux prosecutor, Patrice Davost, said no warning had been issued and no one had claimed responsibility. Investigators said separatist guerrillas waging a long bombing campaign on the French Mediterranean island of Corsica might have planted the device, reportedly made up of plastic explosive or dynamite. The Corsican National Liberation Front-Historical Wing last week claimed responsibility for a bomb outside the law courts in the southern city of Aix-en-Provence, the first on the mainland for several years. — *Reuters.*

Spring seeks role for EU in Israel

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Europe forces its way into Middle East peace process as Christopher presses for rapid results

Spring seeks role for EU in Israel

John Palmer in Dublin and Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE European Union made a defiant intervention in the Middle East peace process last night by sending the Irish foreign minister, Dick Spring, to Jerusalem to seek a bigger EU role in negotiations on the Israeli crisis.

The United States secretary of state, Warren Christopher, also arrived in Jerusalem for the latest round of the talks his country is sponsoring. He urged the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and the Palestinian Authority president, Yasser Arafat, to make rapid progress.

Despite Tel Aviv's initial opposition and Washington's marked lack of support, EU leaders meeting in Dublin insisted that Mr Spring, representing the EU presidency, should meet Mr Netanyahu and Mr Arafat today.

The EU governments are also thinking of appointing a permanent representative to the Middle East, in a role similar to that played by Carl Bildt in Bosnia. The former Spanish prime minister, Felipe Gonzalez is one of those being considered for the job.

As the Dublin summit discussed the Middle East crisis there were persistent reports that Mr Christopher had sent a message asking the EU not to get too closely involved in the talks. The Israeli government had already made clear its anger at the EU foreign ministers' condemnation last week of Israel's refusal to implement the existing peace agreements, calling on it to withdraw from Hebron, and opposing its claim to sovereignty over all Jerusalem.

President Hosni Mubarak



A Palestinian woman calmly balances her burden as she passes through the Bethlehem-Jerusalem checkpoint, reopened by Israel yesterday after a 10-day security closure of the main Arab towns in the West Bank

of Egypt, uncomfortably distant from the centre of the stage, delivered a sharp rebuke to Israel. President Bill Clinton called for partnership and early tangible results.

After the long day of public and private negotiations the negotiators finally met last night in the bleak new conference chamber on the Israeli side of the Erez crossing, on the border of the Gaza Strip.

The first session was expected to be largely ceremonial and agenda-setting. The real business will begin today and could last for several weeks.

Mr Netanyahu is reported to have urged his negotiators, led by Dan Shomron, to seek an early deal on the crucial Hebron issue, in response to heavy pressure from Washington to restore some life to the Oslo peace accords before

next month's US presidential elections.

But he firmly refused to talk of target dates yesterday. "What we seek is a simultaneous recommitment by both sides to the principles that both signed up to in Oslo," he said.

Mr Mubarak, who, having failed to get Mr Netanyahu to talks in Cairo turned down an invitation to the Washington summit, chided Mr Netanyahu for saying he was committed to peace but wanted new negotiations on existing agreements.

"The principle of renegotiation is a dangerous one," he said in a television interview. "These are agreements that are internationally recognised, that were signed here in Egypt and in the United States.

"One must respect them or there will be a catastrophe."

Agencies bite bullet in Kabul

The ban on working women has led to an aid crisis. Jonathan Steele reports from the Afghan capital on the gentle approach

A S thousands of women doctors, teachers and other professionals in Kabul, the Afghan capital, start a second week at home. Western aid agencies have decided not to confront the Taliban authorities over the ban on working women and its closure of girls' schools.

After two long and agonised meetings, the non-governmental organisations operating in Afghanistan are taking a joint statement which will be handed today to Mullah Mohammad Ghans, the acting foreign minister in the new caretaker government.

Mullah Ghans, who also belongs to the Taliban's ruling council, gave the first press conference yesterday since the fundamentalist militia captured Kabul 10 days ago. He made it clear that the government wants international goodwill.

"We hope all countries will take an active part in the reconstruction of our country. Without foreign assistance it will be hard for Afghanistan to stand on its feet," he said.

He repeatedly pleaded for aid, saying it had been wrong for the outside world to "neglect" Afghanistan after the Soviet Union was forced to withdraw. Al-

though he implied that Afghanistan could not accept conditions for aid, since this would be interference in the country's internal affairs, his insistent calls for help showed he understood the country was in a weak position. "No government has officially declared its recognition," he admitted.

Nevertheless, the dominant mood among the international aid community in Kabul is to give the Taliban time and not turn the issue of the veil into a clash of principle. The NGOs' joint statement to the authorities is understood to say the agencies "respect the local cultures of Afghanistan".

It contains no hint of withdrawal of aid if the Taliban's position of women is not changed. Privately, however, agency officials say aid is the international community's only leverage.

For the time being, all agencies have told their women staff not to come to work. In practice, this has meant the collapse of al-

most every aid project. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees runs programmes for women in tailoring, carpet-weaving, and jewellery making. They are paid in cash or food. But programmes for young men in mechanics, car repairs and masonry have also stopped because women help to monitor them.

Despite the crisis, the big agencies claim the gentle approach is best. "We're not a human rights organisation, we're a human assistance programme," said Thomas Gurtner, deputy head of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"We work on the basis that the Taliban will need time to reassess," said Charles McFadden, director of Achar, which acts as a central advocate for 74 agencies. "They've got all these boys from the villages who've never seen women except behind a veil and are now running around Kabul."

Sue Emmott of Oxfam feels urgency and principle are crucial. Faced with the order to send female staff home, she sent the male staff too. "I wanted to send a message that all our staff are handled equally. We don't want to be confrontational. We're just trying to demonstrate who we are and what we believe in."

If the Taliban fail to change their anti-women policy, Oxfam may have to suspend its operations, she said. It is not a decision Oxfam would take lightly.

Canada seeks land mine ban by 2000

Graig Turner in Ottawa

CANADA will put forward an international treaty to ban land mines by 2000 and invite other nations to sign it here next year.

The foreign minister, Lloyd Axworthy, announced the initiative at the weekend after a three-day conference on land mines attended by delegates from 70 countries in the Canadian capital. He acted after the participating governments failed to agree a date

for enforcing a ban. Almost 50 countries endorse a prohibition, but disagree about how extensive it should be and whether to allow exemptions.

The United States opposed a deadline for enacting a treaty, and US officials reacted cautiously to the initiative.

"We're not prepared to set a date, but we are prepared to start work immediately on an agreement to ban land mines. If it can take place within that time frame, and our concerns can be met, we'll be supportive," said Karl F Underfurth,

the deputy US ambassador to the United Nations.

The United States has declared a moratorium on the export of mines, is destroying 3 million mines in its stockpile and is backing a UN resolution for a worldwide ban. But it wants the Demilitarised Zone between North and South Korea to be exempt, saying mines are needed to protect the South from attack.

Some 110 million mines are in place worldwide, killing or injuring 26,000 people a year. — Los Angeles Times

Anguish for Republican candidates

Martin Walker in Washington

MORE than 500 Republican candidates for the House of Representatives and the Senate will be locked in anguished telephone consultations this morning trying to decide whether their presidential candidate Bob Dole did well enough in last night's television debate to keep them from deserting their party's standard-bearer.

"My advice is do what you have to do in your own constituency to win," the Republican congressional leader, Newt Gingrich, advised his fretting troops on the eve of the debate.

The 90-minute encounter in Hartford, Connecticut, was the last real chance for Mr Dole to reverse his ebbing support in the opinion polls and the two candidates were intensely rehearsed for the modern equivalent of a medieval trial by ordeal.

Mr Clinton was prepared for a much-rumoured announcement that retired general Colin Powell would be secretary of state in a Republican administration. Mr Dole had a discreet private breakfast with Gen Powell last Thursday at which he pressed America's best-known African-American Republican to rally to his side.

Mr Dole prepared for his ordeal by flying in George Bush for a personal lunch-time briefing on the former president's experience facing what Mr Dole called "that wily debater" at the podium.

But the debate was foredoomed to be a hollow occasion. The absence of the Reform Party candidate Ross Perot robbed it in advance of much of its potential policy substance. Mr Perot's obsession with the need to protect American jobs could have punctured the Dole-Clinton consensus on free trade.

Mr Dole had to make the debate a bold rescue operation by reminding the voters of their deep-seated doubts about Mr Clinton's character while convincing them that, for once, they could believe a presidential candidate who promised a 15 per cent tax cut.

"There is so much cynicism," Mr Dole's vice-presidential running mate, Jack Kemp, grumbled to an interviewer last week. "People just don't trust politicians to carry out their promises. It's going to take time to show that we are serious."

With the Dow Jones stock market index apparently about to break the record of 6,000 points, unemployment at 5 per cent and the economy growing at 4.7 per cent a year, Mr Clinton would have been content last night to rest on his happy economic record.

He was given a useful extra boost yesterday when two leading environmental groups, the Sierra Club and the League of Conservation Voters, formally endorsed his reelection, despite the Green Party candidacy of the consumers' advocate Ralph Nader.

Years away from victory, G2 Media, page 9

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The Greening of Britain

How Parliament was polluted

JOHN MAJOR got it half right yesterday in his table-thumping breakfast with Sir David Frost. "This matter is poisoning British politics," he exclaimed. And if only he had left it at that and not added "because of the way it is being slanted by people" he might have given the impression that he comprehended the gravity of the case. As it was he seemed to suggest it was all froth whipped up by a slanted media, an impression his press office reinforced by beginning unattributably to brief against the Guardian yesterday. (Expect more denigration of this newspaper in the days ahead. That was certainly the tactic used against the Sunday Times when it mounted its own inquiry into cash for questions two years ago.)

The Hamilton affair is now in danger of degenerating into something between a quagmire and a farce because we are entering a territory without maps and we are in the hands of people who appear to have little or no understanding of the issues involved. Mr Major has such a rudimentary knowledge of the scale of the case or the procedures he wants to employ that he yesterday expressed a wish that Sir Gordon Downey could report "in two or three weeks." Sir Gordon, who works only part-time with the aid of two secretaries, admitted frankly yesterday that this was an impossible timescale. Then we have Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, who, as Chairman of the Members' Interests Committee, sought guidance from a Government whip on how his supposedly independent committee should neuter the Hamilton inquiry when it first landed on his desk in October 1994. Sir Geoffrey now assures us that this secret discussion had no effect on the eventual deliberations of the committee, even though the twin outcomes of the committee's hearings were precisely in line with the two options discussed with the whip, David Willetts. But no senior Conservative — not Mr Major, not Dr Mawhinney, not anyone — had the courage yesterday to say unequivocally that this was an utterly improper conversation for these two men to have had.

Since Sir Gordon is now the panacea pleaded by the Government on all occasions it is worth considering whether he can possibly get at the truth, as Mr Major apparently desires. The reason why legal proceedings get at the truth (and the reason why Hamilton ran away from them) is because evidence is given in public and on oath. It is tested by cross-examination, and by comparison with contemporary accounts and documents. Witnesses proved to lie face jail for perjury. In the adversary system, the truth is sifted and declared by a jury instructed by a judge. Alternatively, with a Tribunal of Inquiry, it is the judge who gives the verdict in an authoritative and reasoned report. Either model produces an acceptable form of justice.

Compare this with Sir Gordon's task. He is, in effect, the clerk to a back-bench committee. He has at present no professional help. He has no powers of any kind, legal, political or moral. Without the say-so of his committee, which has a Conservative majority (including the ubiquitous Geoffrey Johnson Smith), he cannot subpoena documents, or compel attendance or call witnesses on oath, let alone have anyone punished because they have lied to him. As we contemplate the 45-ring binders of evidence collected by the Guardian, which will take several weeks for Sir Gordon to read, let alone to analyse, we remember our lawyers' estimate that Hamilton and Greer would each be grilled for a week in the witness box. We cannot see how, with the best will in the world, Sir Gordon alone is conceivably up to the task of getting at the truth.

So the Prime Minister's damage limitation tactic — a rushed and secret report by Sir Gordon to the Standards and Privilege Committee — will not command any kind of public acceptance. The committee is chaired by Tony Newton and must permit no fewer than four Conservative law officers to join its deliberations. Now the Willetts memorandum is out of the bag why should anyone have faith that this body will be a more rigorous court than the previous committee to have heard the Hamilton case?

This is no kind of substitute for a court or a Tribunal. It is not independent and it is not impartial.

Nor is it thorough. Sir Gordon has no terms of reference and preliminary indications suggest that he will confine his secret inquiries to Mr Hamilton's envelopes. This in fact is the least important part of the story. The true corruption lies in the way that Ian Greer was able on behalf of Mohammed Al Fayed to compromise the senior officers of a key Tory back-bench committee and pass it off to Ministers as an independent reflection of the opinions of Conservative MPs. Unless Sir Gordon sends a forensic accountant into all Ian Greer's books he will never appreciate how this firm operated by influence-buying and influence-peddling. Most explosively he will need to look at the services Hamilton performed for Greer and his clients while a DTI Minister because it was by this route, the Guardian believes (on evidence we have seen but cannot disclose) that the lobbyist's poison spread from the veins of the body politic into the heart of John Major's government.

Unless Sir Gordon investigates all this we will never get to the truth of this scandal. And if he cannot do that then he cannot live up to the expectations of his role now raised by the Prime Minister. He should have the dignity to say so and refuse to participate in a charade rather than risk his own reputation by doing so. That would pull the rug from under the Government's damage-limitation exercise and leave it with no alternative but to set up a Tribunal of Inquiry with statutory power to get at the truth.

It need not take very long. The Guardian is as ready today to present its evidence in public to a Tribunal as it was eager last week to present it in public to a court. Mr Hamilton and Greer have had two years to prepare their case. Their new lawyers would be paid from public funds and should be ready in a month. Stage one of the inquiry could thus begin in November and be completed by Christmas. It would take the form of the libel action the public would now be hearing if Greer and Hamilton had not backed down. The judge could report in January and then proceed to stage two: an examination of the MPs and Ministers paid or rewarded by Ian Greer and what they did for his money. A number of Conservative MPs would be entitled to legal representation at this stage, but the hearings should only take a month and the report could be published before the election — precisely the outcome Mr Major said yesterday he desired.



Letters to the Editor

Castle takes the Field

FRANK FIELD has changed his line of attack (Letters, October 4). Having failed to produce castings of his alternative plan to make us all join private funded schemes he now switches his grounds. Even if the next Labour Government, he argues, were to restore Serps to its original value, there would be nothing to stop a subsequent Tory government from mutilating it again. A private funded pension, he claims, would be more secure.

That must ring hollowly in the ears of millions who have been bribed to the tune of £16 billion to contract out of Serps and occupational schemes into the insecurity of the Private Personal Pensions lottery. Indeed, two thirds are believed to depend wholly on rebates from Serps and make no contributions of their own. So detrimental has the choice proved to be for so many that the Office of Fair Trading has just announced an inquiry.

If the next Labour Government were to spend the public budget of the DSS on explaining the security which Serps offers and were to ensure that every member received an annual statement of the pension rights they had acquired under it, we could build up the same loyalty to Serps as has protected the NHS from the worst manifestations of a marauding Tory government. Barbara Castle, House of Lords, London SW1A 0AA. Peter Townsend, Emeritus Professor of Social Policy, University of Bristol, Bristol BS6 1YB.

COMBINED a period of well-paid work before marriage, paying full contributions, followed by 17 years of marriage and three children, during which time my husband paid a married man's pension, and a further period of more than 10 years' work during which I paid my own contributions. However, my pension is £41.68 a week. Why? The DSS's iniquitous ruling is that "unfortunately you cannot receive both the pension earned on your own contributions and that earned from a married woman's entitlement". But these two entitlements refer to different sections of my life — why should I not have them both? Name and address supplied.

Sleaze watch (cont.)

THE fact that the amendment which permitted Neil Hamilton to waive parliamentary privilege and sue the Guardian for libel was put down by Lord Hoffman, a Lord of Appeal in Ordinary, after he was sounded out by the Lord Chancellor, Lord Mackay, is worrying (Law Lord's favour that backfired on MP, October 2).

Was Lord Mackay doing his sounding while wearing his wig as head of the judiciary or his dubious hat as a Conservative Cabinet Minister? Why did the Lord Chancellor feel it was appropriate to "sound out" a Law Lord? What, precisely, was said between the two? Did anybody "sound out" Lord Mackay before he spoke to Lord Hoffman? If so, what was said to Lord Mackay and by whom? Did the Lord Chancellor never appreciate that the issue was a political one? Why did it take Lord Hoffman so long to discover that the issue was "becoming a political issue"? Why did he not say so when he saw "all those people including Mrs (sic) Thatcher" turning up "making it look as if some sort of whip-like activity had gone on"?

It is a convention of the constitution that only Lords of

Appeal sit in the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords; equally that the Law Lords do not involve themselves in political issues. If these conventions are now to be treated as pie crusts or ignored by the politically naive, is there not a case for removing the functions of the Law Lords to a place where there is no danger of political contagion?

If there is to be an inquiry, who will appoint the judicial chairman? Roy Roebuck, 12 Brooksbury Street, London N1 1HA.

THE GUARDIAN'S efforts, via the admirable work of Alan Rusbridger and Peter Preston, to hose out the sleaze in the Government benches and Tory-loaded select committees, make the task of Hercules, of cleansing the Augean stables, appear child's play.

Hercules, at least, was not thwarted by an amoral bunch of Tory grandees who, in order to prevent his cleansing operation, made every effort to cut off the supply of water from the privatised water authorities. John Sheeran, 3 Southfield Rise, Cheltenham.

SO Neil Hamilton wisely decided not to go to the reception at 10 Downing Street given, believe it or not, for by the Adam Smith Institute (and the gifts, Mr Hamilton, October 3).

What on earth is Major doing with this lot? Not so long ago they were regarded as the lunatic fringe — they thought up the poll tax and still defend it. What were they up to in the week before the Tory conference — writing his speech? If Blair had given a reception for the research department of the Democratic Left, he would have been slaughtered by the Daily Mail.

Bernard Keeffe, 133 Honor Oak Road, London SE23 3RN.

IHAVE lobbied my MP at the House of Commons on two occasions. Ian Greer has a turnover in excess of £3m a year doing the same thing. If the aim is not to influence MPs then what is it? Will you please explain the role of a political lobbyist, and how they can command such a large turnover. SH Keeling, Alton Cottage, Ridgebury, Belper, Derby DE56 2SR.

A miscarriage of justice or why the Allwood case is a one-off

CONGRATULATIONS to Linda Grant for opposing the clamour for more legal restrictions on who can benefit from the new reproductive technologies (Puzzle, think again, October 4). The Mandy Allwood case is not evidence that we need a legal or professional review of circumstances where assisted conception techniques can be used. Nor is the recent case where a woman chose to have her twin pregnancy reduced to a singleton evidence of the need for a review of abortion law. Such cases attract media outrage precisely because they are extremely rare.

If there were evidence that women were needlessly prescribed drugs to stimulate their ovaries, or if the number of women choosing to attempt to give birth to octuplets was large enough to be considered a public health problem, there might be an argument for reconsidering restrictions on the use of fertility drugs. But Mandy Allwood's is an isolated, sad and unusual case which is hardly likely to provoke a copycat response.

There is a serious danger that if legislation, public policy and professional guidelines are formulated in reac-

tion to the rarest cases, it will be to the detriment of those with a legitimate need for treatment. Hard cases do, indeed, make bad law.

Instead of worrying how to prevent future Mandy Allwoods by further restricting the new reproductive technologies, it would be better for those who influence policy to consider how to make these techniques more easily available to those who need them. Ann Furedi, Director, Birth Control Trust, 18 Mortimer Street, London W1N 1RD.

AS MANDY Allwood was only 20 weeks pregnant, she actually suffered an abortion, the medical term for the ending of pregnancy before the 24th week pregnancy. Stillbirth can only happen after the 24th week.

It would be very ironic if this case highlighted the pain, shock and grief that late miscarriage causes to women and their partners, and the improvement in their care to hospital and an improved awareness in society. Jane Stamford-Beale, Oakley Road, Caversham Heights RG4.

In a word...

MODERN bollocks-speak (Letters, October 1, 2, 3 and 4) is even rearing its unprepossessing head in internal university communications. A few months ago, one of my colleagues showed me a memorandum setting out his examination duties. It started with the following message: "I enclose your personal invitation package for the current session." Walter Cairns, Bromhurst Hall, 536 Wilmshor Road, Manchester M20 9RP.

IT is both gratifying and mystifying to this student of nautical history that such interest has been aroused by the revival of a term given to the pair of pulley-blocks fitted to the middle of tossal yards in large sailing ships, that is, bollocks. Owain T P Roberts, Penrill, Penrith, Amlwch, Ynys Môn, Wales.



Kiss of death for loved ones

IFIND the Resuscitation Council's guidelines allow relatives to be present at a resuscitation attempt (Families should see fight for life, October 2). Having once allowed a spouse to be present at the attempted resuscitation of his wife, I would never again wish to play an individual or a resuscitation team in this position. Attempted resuscitations are undignified and can seem degrading to the outsider. The outcome in the vast majority of cases is failure. I find it hard to believe that a

grieving relative wishes to witness the end of their loved one.

Also, having a relative present will inevitably involve one member of the resuscitation team comforting them and could unnecessarily prolong attempts at resuscitation, both of which occurred in the incident I was involved in. (Dr) Ashwin Verma, Frycombe Corner, London N12.

We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear.

A Country Diary

THURNE, NORFOLK: As I carried it out in a couple of dustbin bags it felt like fish, and even when it was revealed in all its frozen glory it suggested something of the streamlined power of a prize salmon. It was, however, a male otter, four feet long, over 20lb in weight and a slightly flattened of the face, where it had been depressed in the freezer, there was little to distort the perfect symmetry of its form. Even as a corpse it brought to mind those magically fluid line drawings by Michael Ayrton, which appear in Gavin Maxwell's masterpiece Ring of Bright Water. I was also reminded of one of the most poignant moments in my childhood reading — when

those air bubbles rise ambiguously to the surface at the end of Williamson's Tarra the Otter. Although these classics help explain Britain's love affair with otters, I suspect they are not the only reason. Curiously, I find confirmation for this idea in the identity of the animal that has come largely to supplant the otter as Britain's totem mammal — the dolphin. It is surely more than coincidence that these two have a number of features in common. Particularly strong is their shared sense of fun. Otters are famous for drooping and retrieving pebbles or repeatedly sliding down mud chutes into water. It is as if they derive a self-conscious joy from simply being alive. But even more important is the fact that otters, like dolphins, live in water. Is it not their exquisite mastery of this primal medium, from which all life emerged, that explains our deep nostalgic affection for them? MARK COCKER

Why I was passed over at the ITN party

Endpiece

Roy Hattersley

DO NOT believe all that you read in even the best of our daily papers. Take, for example, last week's Guardian. On four consecutive days it published stories about the security arrangements at this year's Labour Party conference. Their cumulative effect was the impression that the rules might have been devised by Monty Python and implemented by the Marx Brothers. The idea which they planted in readers' minds was a woefully distorted picture of what really happened. Take it from me, Blackpool security was far more bizarre than the Guardian anecdotes revealed.

On Tuesday evening (being a gentleman, as well as a politician, of the old school) I changed before taking my staff to dinner — not, you understand, into white tie and tails but into a clean shirt and suit increased by a day

in the Winter Gardens. It never struck me to unpin my lapel and move it from one place to the other. Passes were invented to prevent infiltrators interfering with democratic proceedings, not free-loaders gatscrashing parties. So, when we arrived at the Imperial Hotel, although my colleagues had their passes, I did not have mine. Naively, I thought that all I needed to get into the ITN party was the ITN invitation.

The policeman on the gate was also a member of the old school. He saluted me in a Dixon of Dock Green manner and said: "Good evening, Mr Hattersley." He then refused to let me in. After much conversation of the "it's more than my job's worth" variety, an inspector arrived. I showed him five items of identification, including my House of Commons pass. Each of them bore my photograph. I would have exhibited my NUJ card, but I feared that the inspector might be New Labour.

The extensive documentation failed to impress. "We have agreed with the Labour Party," the inspector told me,

"That only a pass would do." I asked for more details. "By the Labour Party, you mean...?" My only hope was to identify an official to whom I might appeal. But the inspector looked at me with the bewilderment of a man who had been asked to provide an ideological definition of the point at which Socialism and social democracy overlap. Believing that he had a lunatic on his hands, he telephoned "Control". While I waited for their response, Tony Blair swept past in his scarlet Rover and gave me a friendly wave. I realised now that I should have thumbled a lift through the barrier.

The first man to arrive from "Control" was an Evening Standard photographer. I smiled benignly at the inspector and even thought of putting a friendly arm around his shoulder. But, fearing arrest for assault, I grinned-on and contemplated the next day's pictures. I had begun to realise that, whatever I did or said, the post-structuralists of the tabloid press would interpret my sub-text as "Officer, I hope you realise that I am a Privy Councillor and the

Chief Constable and I play golf together". The unhappy thoughts were interrupted by the arrival of two Labour Party officials — one very senior and both very helpful. We all began, with the exception of the inspector, to apologise to each other. They offered to hire a taxi, take me to the Conference Centre, have my photograph taken and arrange for a new pass to be

Tony Blair swept past in his scarlet Rover. I realise now I should have thumbled a lift

made. Logic began to do its dangerous work again. If I was entitled to a pass was it totally impossible for me to exercise the rights of a pass-holder and have a drink with Michael Brunson and Eleanor Goodman? It was. My old pass was two miles away in my hotel. One of my colleagues went to get it. The younger of the

Labour Party officials insisted on keeping my company, "to make sure that nothing else goes wrong". His courtesy seemed to be a comment on my age. So to prove him wrong I levered myself onto the five-foot wall which surrounded the forbidden territory and sat there until I could endure the references to Humpty Dumpty no longer.

When my pass arrived, the helpful young official said that, morally speaking, I had stood in the queue for half an hour. He would, therefore, take me round the back so that I might make a speedy entrance to the two, vast prefabricated huts which had been erected in the Imperial forecourt. Every people with passes had to subject themselves to metal detectors.

By the time that he had convinced the inspector that he was entitled to use the back door, people who had taken their places in the queue long after we had attempted the short cut, had completed their screening. When the metal detector screamed, its attendant did not laugh at my joke about the plate in my head. Then, when the offending steel ob-

ject could not be located, he actually asked if my wallet was really made of gold. Eventually we found a paper clip in my jacket lining. Only the explosives search stood between me and a drink.

Before it got within six inches of my hand, the sensitive apparatus began to buzz and shudder. Thank God, I thought, that they deicide not to hire sniffer dogs. The operator, crossed my palms twice more. After the third examination she was satisfied that I did not intend to blow up the whole of Blackpool. So she asked me, ever so politely, for my autograph.

I did not stay long at the party; I did, however, have time to speak to my old friend Chris Price, and agree that 40 years ago, Labour conferences were more exciting than they are today. Then we hoped to meet people like us. Now we know how boring people like us are. As I walked off into the bracing Blackpool night, I wondered why security arrangements had been so strict. I could only think of one possible reason. The shadow cabinet had to be protected from Socialists.

New Delhi Diary

Suzanne Goldenberg

RARELY has such a lowly insect been greeted with anything other than a hard slap. But at a health exhibition this weekend, people crowded around a net cage filled with dozens of buzzing tiger-striped Aedes mosquitoes, tiny killers responsible for an epidemic that is panicking well-to-do areas of Delhi normally believed insulated against pestilence and disease. The Aedes mosquito is a day predator, unlike its better-known malaria-bearing cousin (displayed in an adjacent enclosure for comparison). The smaller variety carries dengue fever, a virus which can lead to death.

Within the last month, more than 1,100 people in the capital have caught dengue fever, and nearly 70 have died — mainly children. Dengue has been around, relatively unnoticed for years, but the current cases officially make this latest manifestation an epidemic.

The large-scale return of the disease, after its last visitation four years ago, owes much to urbanisation and a relative rise in prosperity. The mosquito breeds in cities, and in relatively clean waters. It prefers the hole in the ground which is waiting for the next tower block to be built or dark containers of desert coolers, which are a local, affordable, answer to air conditioning.

As India's cities grow, and as more people invest in coolers, the disease will spread, says Dr K K Datta, the director of the National Institute of Communicable Diseases. "If you walk into any house today you find a cooler. Even servants' houses have them."

Most of those who have fallen ill come from Delhi's better-off neighbourhoods, because they can afford coolers and are knowledgeable enough to go to hospital where their cases can be registered. Alarmingly for the middle classes, the epidemic has hit them directly. Among those infected are doctors and nurses at Delhi's best teaching hospital, and employees at university campuses a few miles away.

Local newspapers have fed off those afflicted just as the mosquitoes did. The Times of India runs a daily Viral Spiral column, and all the papers have carried useful information on symptoms and treatment. But they have also succumbed to hysteria, revelling in the daily death toll and shortages at blood banks due to the rash for transfusions.

In some ways, the panic is reminiscent of the outbreak of the plague two years ago. Although doctors now doubt that disease crept northwards from its origins in western India, Delhi-fites took no chances, wearing surgical masks and rolling the windows of their air-conditioned cars to the top.

Contrast this with the relative silence on far more potent killers: diarrhoeal diseases which claim one million children a year, and tuberculosis, which kills 500,000 annually after lifetimes of suffering.

Although malaria kills fewer people than its emerging competitor, there are 105 million new cases a year, and it is spreading more rapidly. In many parts of India, infant mortality is rising. Except for air pollution, blamed for the deaths of 7,500 people from respiratory ailments in New Delhi alone, most of these diseases strike in rural areas, where doctors are less readily available, even if people are educated enough to seek help.

Some argue that dengue owes its media cachet to complacency about diseases that now prey on the poor. Millions of people still succumb to ancient scourges because of malnutrition, lack of clean drinking water, and restricted access to medical care. The rich can buy protection at private hospitals.

But, as during the season of the plague, the dengue fever epidemic has highlighted the collapse of urban sanitation and public health systems. The present budget allots just 1.4 per cent of government spending to health.

Now the boundaries are breaking down, and even the wealthy are vulnerable. "A mosquito does not respect a rich man or a poor man," Dr Datta says. "Those who are dying are those not expected to die."



Why the Vatican is now an open city

Commentary

John Hooper

AMONG the Vatican's many taboos, one of the strictest is against public discussion of the Papal succession. You will never get a member of the Curia (the Vatican administration) to talk openly about it. Any broadcast or print medium which gazes into the crystal ball to see who might be the next Pope can expect to pay a price. Its correspondent in Rome will discover open doors suddenly slamming shut.

This is understandable. Before there is a succession, there has to be a death. And there is something distasteful about speculating on events stemming from a death. Yet speculation about how long the Pope will live and what happens after he dies is going to be rife in the next few days. Last night, he was due to check into the Gemelli Hospital in Rome for what Vatican spokesmen insist is a minor operation — the removal of a

grumbling appendix. In the past few months almost everything to do with the pontiff's health has been confused. Anyone who watched yesterday's television pictures from St Peter's Square will have seen that his left hand was shaking uncontrollably. It has been doing this increasingly noticeably. Many people believe that he has Parkinson's Disease. On a recent visit to Hungary, his spokesman was quoted by some correspondents as confirming this, obliquely. But the idea has since been denied emphatically.

Three times in the past year, Pope John Paul has been suddenly indisposed — most dramatically, last Christmas, when had to cut short a visit to the Holy Land. Recent studies of population growth have shown millions of Roman Catholics are quietly ignoring their Church's teaching on contraception. Italy now has the lowest birth rate the world has ever seen. Above it, but still low in the world league table, is Spain. And there is evidence of a sharp fall beginning in Latin America.

Factors probably connected with greater prosperity and more education have had far more of an impact on the behaviour of men and women baptised as Roman Catholics than the pronouncements of the man they acknowledge to be St Peter's successor.

It can also be argued that since the papacy is both an absolute monarchy and a job for life, the health of the current incumbent will be extremely important. It is true that the papacy is an absolute monarchy, but the pontificate is not necessarily a job for life. Popes can resign.

Other factors have done much more to concentrate such attention on the medical condition of Karol Wojtyla. One is the nature of the man, and the other the nature of his papacy. He took his job when he was in vigorous form. He is the Pope who has once been a manual worker, who seemed immune to jet lag and long hours, the Pope who strode up mountains and had a swimming pool built at his country mansion. Yet he has been reduced by age, overwork and a mysterious assassin's bullet to someone who, though only in his mid-seventies,

considers his personal suffering as a privileged means by which to participate in the suffering of Christ. You cannot resign from the sufferings of the Cross." Mysteriously though he undoubtedly is, Karol Wojtyla has done more than any Pope to exploit the opportunities offered by modern technology. He has travelled more extensively than any of his predecessors and projected himself into all our lives. He is an international celebrity. He is an instantly recognisable face. He is a global personality, whose well-being is everybody's concern.

The process began before he took the throne of St Peter and can be traced back as far as John XXIII. But with the accession of John Paul II, the papacy took a decision not unlike that which the British monarchy had taken a few years earlier — to open itself up to media exposure.

Having had the benefits of that decision, the papacy, again not unlike the British royal family, is now finding out about the drawbacks. The Curia, which acts as the central administration of the Roman Catholic Church, that "a Pope is never ill until he dies" in the days when pontiffs did not stray much beyond the walls of the Vatican, it was possible to maintain that fiction. The Pope was perhaps known to be poorly. His infrequent public appearances became even more infrequent. Then, one day, usually some time after the event, the fateful announcement was made. But no such discretion is possible when the pontiff can be captured by cameras in close-up and the minutest movements of his voice register on microphones.

The problem with John Paul, G2, page 4

The dark nights of the Round Table



Paul Foot

I SUFFER from BBIV syndrome. It was first identified in a letter written by Shelley after he learned of the Peterloo massacre in 1819. "The torrent of indignation," he wrote, "has not yet done boiling in my veins."

I got a terrible attack of BBIV (blood boiling in veins) last Wednesday while listening to BBC Radio 4's Midweek. Star of the show was Freda Burton, a black waitress from Derby, who, with the support of the Commission of Racial Equality, had just won an important case at the employment appeals tribunal.

She and her mate Sonia Rhule, who is also black, were hired by the Pennine Hotel, Derby, to serve at a large dinner thrown by the Derby Round Table. The afternoon speaker was Bernard Manning. As the two waitresses cleared the tables, Manning pointed them out and showered them with his speciality: racist and sexist abuse. "Very nice. That's how I like my cecoa," he said. "Darkies are great at blow-jobs." This brought the house down.

Libby Purves, Midweek's presenter, said she had heard the tape and the rest of Manning's repertoire was far too nauseating to broadcast. For the benefit of anyone who still thinks that racist "jokes" never did anyone any harm, Freda recounted what happened next. One of the guests asked Sonia what a black woman's vagina tasted like. Freda was seized by another black-tied worthy who supplemented his fondling with four-mouthed innuendo.

The women fled and the following day made a dignified protest to the hotel. "Racism," they concluded, "is an issue which we feel strongly about. To be degraded as to pass off as women and b) because we are black is unforgivable." It is also detestable, disgraceful, disgusting.

Who could be held responsible in law? Not Manning or the Round Table — since this was a "private" function where any amount of racism and sexism is perfectly legal. Now the appeals tribunal has found the hotel responsible for not protecting its staff, and the De Vere hotel group will have to fork out damages. The other good news is that the Pennine Hotel has banned Round Table functions from its premises forever.

What about the Round Table, which has 1,100 clubs all over the country? A spokesman tells me it was formed in 1927 "to encourage fellowship among young men and to help other people." Did this include racially and sexually abusing women? No, the spokesman said. The National Association of Round Tables, which "is not a racist organisation and does a hell of a lot of good," had "regretted" what happened at Derby.

Had the Association at least recommended that Manning should never again be invited to Round Table functions? The spokesman did not know. He said he would send me a copy of a letter about the matter by the national president to all the Round Tables — but he didn't. He also said that if he'd heard the Manning smut, he would have walked out. It had never occurred to him that this sort of abuse will only be stopped when it is openly challenged.

Until the Round Table makes it clear that racism, sexism and Bernard Manning will be outlawed from their functions, I will go on regarding them as a bunch of bourgeois greedies whose main function is to stuff their stomachs and congratulate themselves on their charitable works and social superiority.

WITH each new glorious revelation about the Greer/Hamilton affair, I take a trip down memory lane to the packed town hall in Wakefield in 1972 when I reported the bankruptcy proceedings of Yorkshire architect John Poulson. The barrister for the trustee in bankruptcy, Muir Hunter QC, referred tantalisingly to the "parliamentary file" — which apparently revealed a wide range of Poulson's payments and gifts and bribes to MPs who had helped him.

An embarrassed House of Commons dealt with all this by accepting the resignation of one MP, reprimanding another and exculpating another (the former Home Secretary). One reason for this mild response was that Poulson's favours were evenly distributed between the two main parties, so no one wanted to kick up a fuss.

Today, most recipients of such perks are Tories. None of this excuses the exceptions. It was shocking to hear Chris Smith, Doug Hoyle etc try to pass off the Greer payments to their constituencies as harmless. Greer is not a Labour supporter. He sprays constituencies with money for one reason only: because he hopes the payments one way will assist his company or his clients.

THOUGHT for the Day. Income Data Services report that in the first three months of this year the average gain made by directors of companies who "exercised" their share options at the expense of two phone calls by their secretaries) was £140,000. This represents, on average, 10 years' hard work by the workers in their companies.

John Gray believes that the Tory party has no choice but to continue with its negative campaign



Down and dirty

THE disclosures surrounding Neil Hamilton MP may have finally put paid to the strategy of the Tory party chairman, Dr Brian Mawhinney, of warning voters that Labour can't be trusted with power.

The government of John Major cannot avoid being deeply tainted by what has been revealed. It is no good it saying that the electorate has become mistrustful of the entire political class. That may well be true. But the way the Hamilton affair has been handled will confirm voters' worst suspicions. It tells them

that, after 17 years of Conservative rule, the barriers between the institutions of the British state, the government and the ruling party of the day, on which our freedoms depend, have crumbled.

Voters' mistrust of Conservative government is now inevitable. They fear another term of Tory rule. This fact alone must put in considerable doubt the efficacy of the New Labour, New Danger campaign on which so much has been staked. We all know why he adopted the campaign of denouncing the Labour leader. One of the results of that leadership has been to

exorcise the boogies from which the Tory party has drawn its strength over the past century. By removing its traditional enemy, Blair has stripped the Tory party of much of its identity. It is bad enough not knowing, after nearly two decades in power, what you are for. It is even worse if you can no longer be sure what you are against. What then is Dr Mawhinney to do?

The differences between the Conservatives and Labour today are real and deep. The Tories, it tells us that the City has already discounted a Labour victory — and is unfazed by the prospect. Many financial institutions, together with much of British industry, have concluded that no coherent European policy can be hoped for from the Tory government.

The European issue will be as dangerous for the Tories over the next few years as industrial relations were for Labour in the run-up to the elections in 1979. It is best left alone — if that can still be managed — until after the election.

Wanted: ideas the politicians won't propose

Larry Elliott opens our new free access zone with a demand for a carbon tax

ANOTHER MANIFESTO

LABOUR'S conference last week was a wonder to behold. It was packed, stage-managed, choreographed beautifully. This week the circus moves to Bournemouth, where the Conservatives will try to turn the same trick. The public are rightly suspicious of this process, which is fast becoming the epitome of style over content. Parties insist on keeping to their tightly-defined agendas, which in some of the key areas are virtually indistinguishable. Politics should not be a policy-free zone; but some issues are simply not

spoken about. Monetary union is off-limits, as is the legalisation of cannabis, the reduction of the age of consent, widening the range of goods and services covered by VAT, privatisation of education and the future of the public schools and countless other awkward subjects.

This column is designed to help. In the months up to the election, the Guardian will be offering politicians and voters alternative ideas. Week by week, we will be seeking to widen the debate by presenting the innovative, the constructive and the ingenious ideas that the mainstream political parties prefer to ignore. We invite any group or individual to offer suggestions — big or small — for inclusion in Another Manifesto. Provided that they are not

illogical, illegal or insane then they will all be considered. As polling day approaches, a panel of outside experts will judge which ideas most deserve to be taken up by our political masters and put to the people.

One idea is the introduction of a carbon tax, which is highly unlikely to feature in either the Conservative or Labour manifestos. Environmentalists say that a carbon tax makes ecological sense because it cuts down on the carbon dioxide emissions that are causing global warming. They argue that it is absurd to tax things we want more of — jobs — while at the same time leaving untouched a thing we want less of: pollution.

Revenue raised from the levy could be used to cut National Insurance contributions for employers, making it cheaper to hire staff. Or it could be a way for the Conservatives to reduce income tax or for Gordon Brown to cut the starting rate of tax to 10p in the pound. And tougher taxes on pollution would encourage the development of alternative energy sources and force UK industry to come up with cleaner technologies. Germany, Japan and Scandinavia are well ahead of Britain when it comes to firms selling anti-pollution devices. This is one of the fastest-growing and most lucrative areas of the global economy.

Opponents argue that a carbon tax would force up prices and hit the poorest hardest, because they spend a higher proportion of their limited incomes on fuel and power than do the rich. Labour believes efforts should be concentrated on saving energy rather than on a new tax. Industry is sceptical. The Confederation of British Industry says that a carbon tax would push up costs, leading to lower growth and higher unemployment.

So what do you think? Would such a tax be a sensible start to a recasting of the taxation system — or a middle-class hobby horse that would hurt the poor and put jobs at risk? Do you, or your organisation, have any better ideas? It is over to you.

Please send brief proposals and responses to: Another Manifesto, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3EF (fax: 0171 837 4530; E-mail: letters@guardian.co.uk)

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Lord Roskill of Newtown

Trials of intellect

EUSTACE Roskill, who has died aged 85, was one of his generation's outstanding commercial lawyers, who, while he intermittently stepped aside to perform public service in a number of fields, scaled the judicial heights that befitted his intellectual talents. In the public mind, his name is associated with the Committee on Fraud Trials which, in 1986, recommended the replacement of trial by jury for serious fraud cases by a judge and two expert lay members. Although the recommendation has never been acted upon, recent criminal trials have put the recommendation back on the political agenda.

Roskill was the youngest of a quartet of brothers, sons of John Roskill KC and Sybil Dilke (a niece of Sir Charles Dilke MP), who all won distinction in public life. His eldest brother, Ashton, was also a distinguished commercial lawyer with whom Eustace had some titanic battles in the courtroom before Ashton left the Bar to become chairman of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Eustace went from Winchester to Exeter College, Oxford, where he gained a first in history. It was his academic record that was constantly seen to be in play, in forming and punctuating many of his judgments, both on and off the Bench.

He spent nearly a quarter of a century as a judge; 15 years as a trial judge and 10 as an appellate judge (10 of them in the Court of Appeal through-

out the 1970s). As a trial judge sitting in the commercial court, he found his niche, exhibiting an astonishing ability to absorb a mass of evidential detail, promptly organising it, and delivering an extempore judgment of perfect symmetry. In an action in 1966, involving the ostensible or apparent authority of a company director, he delivered an off-the-cuff judgment — beyond the "110th hour of the eve of the Christmas Vacation" — covering 15 pages of the law report (some 7,000 words), which the Court of Appeal dubbed as a *tour de force*.

Roskill was much less at home in the criminal court. His handling of the trial at the Old Bailey in the Millicham Co-op murder case in November 1962 came under heavy criticism in the Court of Criminal Appeal. Two of the three defendants found guilty by the jury succeeded on appeal. The court said of comments made by the trial judge about some defence evidence: "To say that he was pouring scorn on an expert witness for the defence was scarcely putting it too high. It was incumbent on the judge to deal with it fully and fairly." That was an abridgement, out of character and remains inexplicable. But the incident, and a transfer to public duties, delayed his promotion.

Roskill performed two extra-judicial tasks before he went to the Court of Appeal in 1971. From 1969-70, he chaired the commission set up to select a third London airport from among 100 different sites. Roskill recommended the building of an airport at Cub-

lington in Bedfordshire, but there was never any real prospect that it would be built — ostensibly on environmental grounds. The commission, to Eustace's intellectual delight, became immersed in the new accounting techniques of cost-benefit analysis which measure things with fair accuracy but measure political pressure not at all. It was a classic example of the folly of choosing a judge, unused to judging the politics of environmental and social issues.

Prior to that inquiry, Roskill had been appointed as the first vice-chairman of the Parole Board, an innovation under the Criminal Justice Act 1967 to determine a pris-

oner's date of release. The experience of reading reports from prison staff visibly made an impact on his approach to sentencing when he came to the Court of Appeal. Like all the later judicial members on the Parole Board, he responded readily to the plea by every successive post-war Home Secretary, until very recently, to use the scarce resource of imprisonment sparingly, and even when it was necessary to impose custody to pass a term of imprisonment for the least amount

of time consistent with the principles of penal policy.

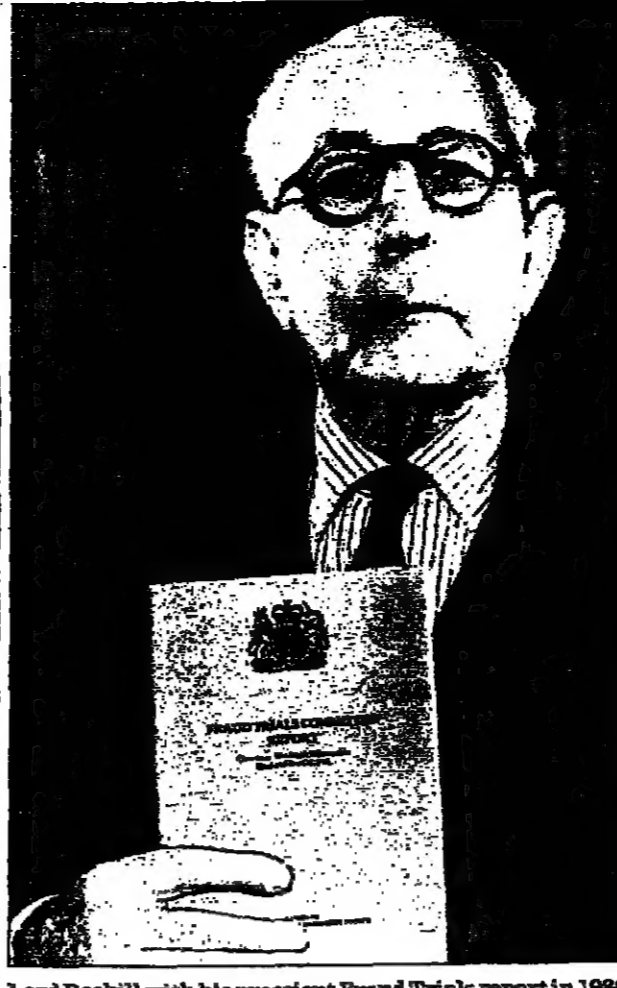
In the Court of Appeal, Roskill tended to deliver and write lengthy judgments, the more notable for their occasional literary allusions and historical recitation. His judgment in the *Gay News* case of 1978, involving the poem depicting Jesus Christ as a homosexual, was an exegesis on the law of blasphemy, copiously referenced to 18th and 19th century prosecutions. Any historian, legal or social, can usefully turn to Roskill's judgment.

He was only just short of his 70th birthday when he was elevated to the House of Lords. Less than six years provided too little opportunity for much more than a handful of notable judgments, but the law reports are dotted with judicial pronouncements of some significance. In the famed GCHQ case in 1984, his speech repays a careful read. He recouped, with a nice historical perspective, the recent upsurge in judicial activism through the instrument of judicial review, he buried the hallowed phrase of "natural justice" in favour of a minister's or administrator's duty to act fairly; and he was insistent that evidence, not mere assertion, must be forthcoming from government before the courts would allow claims to national security to preclude judicial investigation of particular individual grievances of governmental action.

Judicially, Roskill was a conservative. While never himself adopting an activist posture, he was not averse to

making new law in his judicial capacity. Outside the courtroom, his abiding professional love was for his inner Court. He was never happier than when he was dining in Middle Temple hall, with its magnificent hammer beam roof and oak-paneled walls. He became the Inn's treasurer in 1980 and continued right up to the last days of his life to show a keen interest in the affairs of the Inn.

A haughty manner — exemplified by the shape of his mouth, the tone of speech and the tilt of his head — could not conceal the warmth and friendliness towards his fellow human beings, particularly those of the younger



Lord Roskill with his prescient Fraud Trials report in 1986

generation; not just his grandchildren, with whom he established a remarkable rapport. This was no doubt the product of a highly successful marriage to Elisabeth Jackson in 1947. She was a constant, endlessly cheerful source of comfort and support to Eustace, the ideal consort to an English barrister and judge in over 40 years of fruitful professional activity. She survives him with one son and two daughters.

Martyn Harris

Laughing in the face of fear

AT THE beginning of his comic and dandy melancholy second novel, *The Mother-in-Law Joke*, Martyn Harris quotes Will Rogers: "Every thing can be funny so long as it happens to somebody else." But for Martyn — one of the best and most truthful journalists of our time, who has died of lymphoma, aged 43 — this was an ironic statement, for he was his own best and cruellest joke.

He treated himself with the same sardonic humour, merciless criticism and tender scorn that he could turn on other people. He never did himself any favours, never stood on his own dignity. Instead, he put himself on the line, for his readers and for his friends, mocked his own intimate mistakes and terrors. For a man so successful and dandy, witty and sharp, he was extraordinarily unprotected, raw to his life and to his death. And he faced dying with the same vivid fear and unshrinking courage with which he faced living.

He was born in Swansea, the son of a greengrocer-father and a teacher-mother, who both survive him. He went to Swansea's Bishop Gore Grammar School, where he was unwisely clever. Although he left Swansea for Kent University, he never lost his Welshness: his dark hair, pale stubbly skin, the cadence of his voice, his enduring child-like hood, the sense of being somehow an outsider, his leaving politics, his love of Welsh pubs and Welsh landscapes, and the tug of the Welsh Church which gave him his complicated faith and capacity for gull.

He entered journalism, late and unconvincingly, by writing for a computer magazine, sub-editing for *Ceebe*, editing an obscure and quickly extinct journal called *Office Systems*. Then for several years he was a writer and columnist on *New Society*, where his dry wit and elegant prose caught the eye of the *Daily Telegraph*. There, as a feature writer, columnist and interviewer, he was never sick and he was never sentimental. He hated bullshit and hypocrisy; he hated political correctness and cliché and dullness. He could interview politicians, actors, writers, and with the searchlight of his honesty see through their fame. Although he did dozens of interviews a week after work, sometimes with the same person over and over again, he never became complacent. He found the work hard and sometimes frustrating, and he would rage against its restraints. There were many times when he wanted to give up journalism and dedicate himself to writing novels.

His two novels — *Do It Again* and *The Mother-in-Law Joke* — were both reviewed as "comic novels" and yet, bawdy and funny as they are, they are also anatomies of guilt, autobiographies not in their profane plots but in their self-mocking self-identification. For he was a difficult man: bold, prickly, reckless and full of doubts. He was also clear-sighted, big-hearted, kind. He was sometimes rude

but he was never a bully. He was always original.

His first wife was Cathy Meus, an Irish actress and dancer, together from 1970-80, having two children, Sarah and Tom. In his second wife, Caroline Heier, who he met at *New Society*, he found his match for honesty, humour, the capacity for intimacy. She was unconditional and unservient. She delighted him, and she sustained him during the cancer years. They had a son, Jo.

Martyn was always scared of dying. He was of the Larkin school, haunted all his life by his own mortality. He did not easily come to terms with cancer, and yet he made dying his last and greatest subject, his final gift to his readers. He stood face to face with death and did not flinch, but treated it with bits of bitter laughter and moments of luminous spirituality. In the *Spectator*, he wrote a breathtakingly honest feature about his terror, his hope, his greed for life. Later, in the *Telegraph*, he wrote one of his best pieces ever, on how he was finding his way back to a faith in God, that he had lost as a rebellious child. In his final columns in the *Telegraph*, "On the Sick", written from hospital when he was having a bone marrow transplant and was in unimaginable torment, he managed to



Harris... sardonic humour

be witty, light-hearted, informative and entirely without self-pity.

The last time I saw Martyn, we agreed to both write an obituary for *W B Yeats*. Martyn already knew the beginning ("He disappeared in the dead of winter"), but I beat him to the end ("In the deserts of the heart/Let the healing fountain start/In the prison of his days/Teach the free man how to praise"). Mind you, he beat all of us to The End, leaving a gap that will not be filled.

He hated dreariness, snobbery, hypocrisy, mindless manners, bad prose, stock phrases. He loved beautiful women, beautiful views, beer with the lady, books. He adored his children and his wife. He could cook a fine risotto, decorate a room like a pro, write sentences that George Orwell might have envied. He was angry, generous, sweet. He had a great giggle. He was unforgettable.

Birthdays

Jenny Abramsky, controller, BBC Radio 5 Live, 50; Christopher Booker, journalist and author, 59; Joseph Cooper, pianist and broadcaster, 64; Clive James, critic and broadcaster, 67; Thomas Kenally, novelist, 61; Pamela Mallinson, secretary, Forestry Commission, 42; Yvonne Menzies, pianist, 75; Maj-Gen Julian Thompson, Falklands war commander, 62; Jayne Torvill, ice skater, 38; The Most Rev Desmond Tutu, Archbishop of Cape Town, 66.

Death Notices

LILLISTON, Phyllis (née Hooper) an Oct. 24, 1907, wife of Bob, died Oct. 5, 1996. Buried in St. George's Cemetery, 3300 Park Road, Los Angeles, CA. Family will be held at 10:30 am, Oct. 12, 1996, at the funeral home, 1212 Evergreen St., London NW1.

In Memoriam

JACKSON, Gary C. died 7th October 1995, aged 55. Forever in our hearts and minds.

Birthdays

READ, Roy, happy 85th birthday to my Grandpa. Old, but still going strong. M to phone our announcement telephone 0171 713 4827. Fax 0171 713 4224.

Emily Sheffield

Seymour Cray

Prototype nerd who changed the world

SEYMOUR Cray, who has died aged 71, some weeks after a car crash, is recognised as the Father of Supercomputing, and designed most of the world's fastest computers. Today, these are used for things like weather forecasting, seismic analysis, and hi-tech product development, but initially the market consisted of "spooks and nukes". The spooks used them for things like creating and cracking secret codes, while the nukes used them to simulate H-bomb explosions. Indeed, Cray told *Science* magazine that the ability to test bombs on a computer "seems to me to be the vehicle that led to the Test Ban Treaty" in 1963.

Cray's name first became known outside the computer industry when his company, Cray Research, shipped its first Cray-1 supercomputer to America's Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory in 1976. But by then he had already spent 25 years designing high-speed computers and, almost single-handedly, creating an industry. Larry Smart, director of America's National Centre for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois, said: "There wouldn't really be a supercomputer industry as we know it but for Seymour Cray."

And it happened by accident. In 1951, after graduating from the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis, with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering and a master's in applied mathematics, Cray was wandering what to do next. "It was just a fortunate coincidence that I ended up at the beginning of computing," he said. One of his instructors suggested he just go down the street to Engineering Research

Associates, who were developing cryptographic equipment for the US Navy in an old glider factory in St Paul, Minneapolis. It gave Cray the chance to design his first computer, the 1103. Cray continued to work in the same place with the same people, when ERA was taken over by Remington Rand, and then by Sperry, which produced the first commercial mainframe computer, the Univac.

However, in 1957, mazy leading figures in the St Paul factory broke away and founded Control Data Company (CDC), raising some of the money by selling stock on street corners. CDC set up in a warehouse at 501 Park Avenue, where Cray designed the CDC1604 (1103+501-1604). It

"the Hermit of Chippewa Falls" building tunnels under his house. In any event, it worked.

Cray came up with the CDC6600, and CDC quickly took over the scientific computer business — to the chagrin of the almighty IBM, whose boss, Tom Watson Jr, fired off an angry memo because he didn't like being beaten by a company with only 34 employees "including the janitor".

Cray repeated the process several times, founding new companies and building new supercomputers using the most advanced (and therefore the riskiest) technology available. In 1972, he left CDC to found Cray Research Inc with only 12 employees; in 1983, he founded Cray Computer in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and last year, he founded SRC Computers Inc. As he jokingly told the *Wall Street Journal*: "My life is a perfect example of a circular career path."

Cray Research was hugely successful, and sold more than 300 large supercomputers in 20 years. Cray Computer — where Cray was working with new gallium arsenide instead of silicon chips — ran into trouble and its only customer withdrew its order before the machine was finished. SRC, a start-up, was years from producing a product.

But it may be that Cray's death signals the end of the supercomputer industry he founded. US-based manufacturers have been going down like ninespins, and Cray Research was itself recently taken over by Silicon Graphics Inc, a manufacturer of smaller technical computers called workstations. Partly, this is the result of the end of the cold war: the government-financed



Cray and his last completed supercomputer, Cray-3, in 1994

"spooks and nukes" are no longer prepared to spend tens of millions of dollars on the fastest possible computers, or wait years for them to be delivered. Partly, it is the result of microprocessors — the cheap chips used in personal computers and workstations — becoming more and more powerful. They may not be capable of the highest levels of performance required for scientific research, but they meet the more modest needs of the mass market.

For Cray, however, designing supercomputers was always less of a commercial than a personal challenge. "I really love what I do," he said. "I've been well taken care of in my lifetime. God looks after me, so to speak, and so... as I view it, you can leave the responsibilities for all of the peripheral aspects of life to someone else."

Cray was a "computer nerd" long before the term was invented, and little is known of his personal and family life, though he married and raised three children. His father, a Chippewa Falls city engineer, was also "a thing-oriented person" instead of human-oriented person. Cray said, and his mother provided whatever social contact he had. He added: "I only ask the same of my wife now. Take me out on the town once in a while. But not too often."

Jack Schofield

Seymour Cray, computer designer, born September 28, 1925; died October 5, 1996

George Reid

GEORGE Reid, who has died in London aged 59, was the Dublin-born schoolkeeper of St Aloysius Boys' School in Highgate, north London, who with his wife Kitty probably had the largest extended family in the capital. Not content with his own mini-tribe system who ate together weekly, he and Kitty managed to foster 224 boys and girls who were difficult to place. No one was ever turned away or asked to swear allegiance to the Pope.

George was born into a poor Dublin family and when, at the age of six, he confronted the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alfie Byrne, out canvassing, he asked His Worship to get his mother a house. Byrne, captivated by the alert blond boy, obliged within a week.

Like so many other Irish people, he arrived in boom town Coventry in the late 1850s. He picked up the basic skills of a tool maker and quickly became a controller of a production line in a car factory. At £2 a week, the Reids were in clover. That was until George stopped the production line once too often for faulty work. Several of the women line workers told him the effect of this on their weekly wages. He left, refusing to be the cause of their shrinking wage packets.

At St Aloysius, energy flowed from his house, a tied cottage within the school grounds. Swimmers, boxers, sailors, musicians in the school found a practical environment. Children gravitated to him, some brought in by desperate social workers from living along the railway lines in north London or from shattered homes. With George and Kitty, they were safe and secure. He was a miracle worker who UNICEF would have poached — the godfather and grandfather of Highgate's Irish carers.

Myra Harrington

George Patrick Reid, schoolkeeper, born September 7, 1937; died September 12, 1996

Jackdaw



Little Hitler

AND who's this little fellow in his lily-billy robe? That's tiny baby Adolf, the Hitlers' little boy!

Will he grow up to be a L.L.D.?

Or a tenor in Vienna's Opera House?

Whose teeny hand is this, whose little ear and eye and nose?

Whose tummy full of milk, we just don't know, printer's, doctor's, merchant's, priest's?

Where will those tootsy-wooties finally wander? To a garden, to a school, to an office, to a bride?

Maybe to the Burger-

meister's daughter?

An example of the Nobel Prize for literature's winner, Wislawa Szymborska. The poem is called "Hitler's First Photograph" and is taken from the collection, "The People on the Bridge", 1986.

Perfect partner

THE Virtual Girlfriend and Virtual Boyfriend are artificial intelligence programs for your IBM PC or compatible, and also for Macintosh. You can watch them, talk to them, ask them questions, tell them secrets, and relate with them. Watch them as you ask them to take off different clothes and guide them through many different activities. Watch and participate in the hottest sexual activities available on computer, including: several sexual positions, using many unique toys, even bringing in multiple partners.

This is no doubt one of the most realistic, sexually stimulating computer games available. They will remember your name, birthday, your likes and your dislikes.

Every time you start the program, they say different things, and act differently. Each time, they have a different personality. With the VCA digital graphics, The Virtual Girlfriend and Virtual Boyfriend software have some of the hottest, sexiest graphics out there. And with a Soundblaster or compatible card, you can actually hear their voice as they talk to you.

This is the first adult software title that was designed for both heterosexual and homosexual people. I would like you to try the actual full copy out before it is put on the market. It will be sold for one-fifth of the actual price until I can get back some information on what people think of the program. Please give it a try and write back any comments. If you are interested and would like to order a copy, then you can read the matching instructions below. It comes in an unmarked package.

Virtual Girlfriend and Virtual Boyfriend are artificial intelligence programs, meaning they are completely inter-

active. It would be just like if you were talking to someone. You can actually have simple conversations. Their attitudes change with the different things you say, so you can say things that will upset them, and then say things that will please them. The more you play/talk with them, the more you learn what they can do, and what they like to do. It really is a blast. With all these movies coming out about virtual reality, it's amazing to actually have a virtual reality program like this for your own computer. At your request, the program can come with a password protection utility that only allows the program to run when the correct password is entered. An advert circulating on the internet, found by Lindsay Marshall. Maybe dating agencies will be no more, they will simply design the perfect partner and pop it in the post.

A dog's life

TAZ, he used to be so depressed! In fact he was bawling out. Life wasn't fun at all. He didn't even know what a fireplug was! And everybody kept yelling at him. "No" this, and "No" that! Then he went through basic training and life has new meaning. If there's a depressed, four-legged friend in your house, here's a simple solution.

1. Get rid of the problem, not the dog, regardless of the age of your favourite pooch.
2. Insist on real love, praise and affection training by an experienced professional who understands your dog's personality.
3. Remember the 11th commandment: never hit your dog. He'll love you for it.
4. Call us today for personal, one-to-one, basic or advanced training.

There is no end to the humanising of creatures. The advert was spotted in the Los Angeles magazine.



LA magazine... pooch rules

A: Special conditions apply in this case. Slick, professionally built jobs: no. Tick-ups from materials at hand, yes.

Q: What is a Mk V-c?

A: Well, only the most coveted of all sheds, that's all. Mk V-c has one with provenance that implicates Kitchener in its construction. The Mk V-c is the archetypal shed with such features as: a knurled door handle for ease of operation when you have slime on your hands; a very small window with pre-installed grime reducer light inlets to a minimum; extra 4ins nails on the studs to improve hanging capacity; downwardly adjustable headroom to ensure that no owner shall be able to stand fully upright.

Q: Does a tree-house count?

A: Only in as much as they can be seen as a precursor to true shedsness and are generally the outward manifestation of a young lad's desire to eventually become fully ensheded.

Q: What exterior decoration might I undertake?

A: None. Dilapidation is the hallmark of fine sheds. Decorative sedulousness is

undesirable. Paint, finials, fretwork and the like are to be included in the nomenclature of contents and one should never consider using decorative embellishments. The judicious application of ruses is acceptable.

Q: What can I put in my shed?

A: The key to this is uselessness. If there is a possibility that the item could have a future use, it should not be consigned to the shed, the shelter of which must only be offered to the shoddy, worthless, rejected and unusable items in your possession.

May you be blessed with an exundation of shedding pleasures.

Hope this faquette helps. Jeff Drabble.

Maybe his name should be changed to Jeff Drabble. Discovered by Dave Budd on the newsgroup uk.rec.sheds.

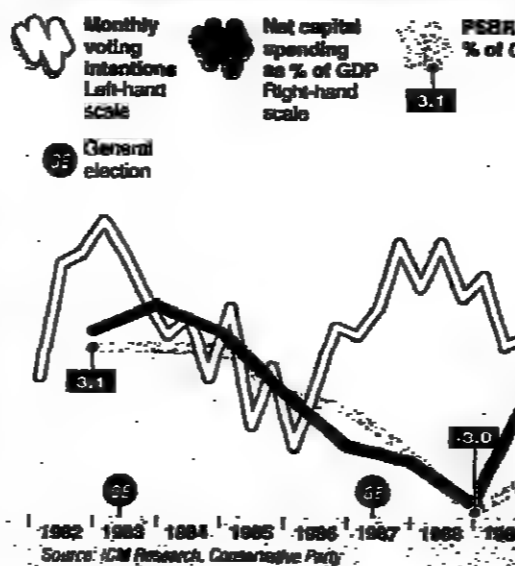
Jackdaw wants jewels. E-mail jackdaw@guardian.co.uk; fax 0171 713 4826; jackdaw, The Guardian, 115 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER.

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Conservatives



Election results

Year	Seats	% of votes
May 1979	339	43.9
June 1983	397	42.4
June 1987	376	43.4
April 1992	336	42.3



John Major, 1995

ELECTION BATTLEGROUND/Same old Tories, the same old stagnation and drift

Local power rates little with this lot

SARAH RYLE sees a paradox behind the promises of decentralisation

ONE OF the key Conservative promises has been to keep central government's role to a minimum. So it is ironic that the party of decentralisation should have done so much to centralise functions and finance which were once run by local authorities.

"There has been no more crucial period for local government in its history," said Robin Went, secretary of the Association of County Councils.

"Many people in local government feel that it has been part of Conservative ideology to remove their power.

"There is a feeling that the Conservatives could not accept that bodies with such power might have a different view from the Government's."

The most vital blow has been the reduction of locally-raised revenue from more than 50 per cent of budgets to roughly 20 per cent in Eng-

land, and less in Wales. This began in the early 1980s when the government restricted the spending of a handful of authorities, the precursor to more widespread although still selective capping which in turn gave way to universal capping.

"Whereas when the Tories came to power, local authorities could decide for themselves the size of the cake and how it should be cut, now they can only decide how to cut the cake they are given," Mr Went said.

Central government effectively decides how much council tax locally elected representatives should charge their communities because it sets the grant from Whitehall and determines the spending limit.

This has benefited some councils, most notoriously Westminster, which receive large grants and therefore charge low council tax, and has worked to the detriment of others, despite supposedly objective criteria.

CENTRAL government now also determines the business rate, once locally levied. The two other main aspects of centralisation, as the local authorities see it, are the transfer of functions such as education to central gov-

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- 'POTTERALONG' PSBR BOILER FITTED
- NO INDUSTRY NEARBY

AVAILABLE MAY 97

ernment and the enforced contracting out of first blue collar and then white collar services.

First the former polytechnics and then the sixth-form colleges were taken away from local authorities' remit, transferring power to higher education and further education quangos which monitor

and fund individual governing bodies. Schools, too, can now opt out of local education authority control, receiving their funds direct from Whitehall.

Although the Conservatives argue that this has devolved power to governing bodies, councils argue that they had considerable autonomy in

any case, and say that these bodies are no longer accountable to their local communities but to Westminster instead.

The only significant responsibility handed over to local government since 1979 has been the provision of social services, Mr Went said.

In the case of compulsory competitive tendering, the Government and Conservative councillors argue that the criteria for contracts are set by local authorities and that competition provides the best value for money.

Many others view it as another way of reducing councils' remit while adding to their administrative burden.

PERHAPS the Conservatives' final attempt to alter the face of local government was total reorganisation with the purpose of replacing the county and district two-tier system with unitary authorities.

In Wales and Scotland, there was no consultation. Both now have unitary authorities. In England, there was a concession. A commission was formed under Sir John Banham and the result is that of 39 county councils at the start of the process, 34 remain. Two-tier government still covers 23 million people.

It may be a measure of how disaffected with the Conservatives' approach to local government the electorate has become that the party now only controls one county council in England, Buckinghamshire.

But Mr Went believes that it is more likely to be a reflection of voters being influenced by national issues when they select local councillors.

"Within five years of a Labour government, it will probably start to swing the other way and after ten years then the political complexion of councils would almost certainly be transformed from what it is now," he said.



Larry Elliott

AS POLLING day approached in 1979, Jim Callaghan knew the game was up for Labour. There was such a mood shift and such a hunger for change that he was powerless to resist. What was true 17 years ago is again true now. A stench of rot and decay seeps from the Conservatives.

The parallels between Labour 17 years ago and the Tories today are uncanny. Then, as now, the Prime Minister was seen as a decent but ineffectual. Then, as now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was a rumbustious character unloved by the "ultras" in his own party. It would be no surprise if Mr Clarke were to be booted off the stage at the Conservative Party conference, just as Mr Healey was by his activists 20 years ago.

Under Mr Callaghan, the economy recovered from the sterling crisis of 1976, but the Labour Party never did. The cheaper

prompted an export-led pick-up in activity, but investment was weak and the curbs on living standards from income policy meant that the public mood remained sour.

For John Major, departure from the ERM was the catalyst for growth, but the cost of bringing down the PSBR has been stagnating real incomes. Investment has remained worryingly weak; crisis management has meant there has been no time or energy to

radical reform from In Place of Strife in 1983 to the reorganisation of local government in 1974, then a profound shock followed by inexorable decline. By the Winter of Discontent, collectivism was discredited, Mrs Thatcher plugged into the cultural shifts towards individualism.

If the trade unions were then perceived by floating voters as the symbol of everything that was wrong with

Britain, in 1996 it is sleaze. It is not only that Neil Hamilton has been on the take, but also that he cannot see that his activities fill the public with disgust.

Conservatives do not need to be reminded that the problems for Labour did not end in 1979. Within 18 months of Callaghan's defeat, the party had split, ensuring a generation out of office. A post-election Conservative split into anti-European and pro-European wings looks likely, with Mr Clarke joining the pantheon of great leaders the Conservatives never had.

That is the bad news for the government. The good news is that much of the Thatcher-Major legacy will live on under a Blair administration. There will be only minor changes to trade union legislation, no programme of rationalisation and no attempt to use the tax system to shift resources from rich to poor. Labour has embraced both the market and the middle classes.

Mrs Thatcher's political success was also built on the big increases in real incomes enjoyed by those in work during the 1980s.

Other countries did it differently, ensuring that any gains were evenly spread, but in the UK the decoupling of

and labour have not been addressed. Of the much-vaunted trickle-down effect there has been no sign.

Finally, at the very heart of the Thatcherite project was the notion that free-market economics would signal the end of the welfare culture of the 1970s and get the government off the people's backs.

This simply has not happened. Government is everywhere in the quango-ridden Britain of 1996, coping with the cost of free-market failure among those in the underclass ignored by the affluent majority and catering for the victims of laissez-faire economics. The nanny state is alive and well, regulating, policing, monitoring, snooping, controlling.

When Conservatives say they have changed the Zeitgeist it is true in only a limited sense. In effect, they have set up what amounts to a nationwide counselling service to fill the gap where demand management and redistribution used to be. People were once employed to make things; they are now employed to help others cope with not making things.

One speaker at a Labour fringe meeting last week said he was surprised that there were remarkably few debates in Blackpool about economics. He should not have been. Mrs Thatcher's triumph is that neither party now has any real desire to manage capitalism. Her great failure is that she has spawned a giant bureaucracy that manages everything else.

Three years ago, that great stakeholding com-

pany Mercedes-Benz invited US states to bid for a new car plant. Alabama "won", at a cost of nearly \$300 million in subsidies. To maintain its payments to Mercedes, Alabama tried raiding its education budget, and is now borrowing from its own pension fund at penal rates of interest. Over in South Carolina, that other great stakeholder BMW extracted about \$100 million.

We at least have a governing party on much the same moral level as our big-business masters. As Lenin said, when among wolves, howl like a wolf. Better still, be a wolf. New Labour will be eaten alive by these people.

People were once employed to make things; they now help others cope with not making things

Dirty dancing with business wolves

Worm's eye Dan Atkinson

HERE'S a new way to play the lottery, turning those millions to one odds to your advantage. Select your lucky (ha, ha) numbers, but don't buy a ticket. Pray like mad your numbers aren't selected (they won't be) and have a £2 treat at the new year.

Apply the same inverse-satisfaction technique to the Tory Party conference. Yes, they've inflicted a lot over the years, but for every infliction there's been a deflection. The Poll

Tax was pretty awful, but it did shield us from the "local income tax" proposed by that nice Mr Kinnock. The Lawson Boom did allow us to buy some pretty clothes; Mr Foot's £10 billion-odd "inflation package" would have left us with the same bangover but a wardrobe full of brown leather jackets and "No cuts" T-shirts.

And at least the Tories had the decent cowardice to pull out of the ERM in 1992; brave New Labour would still be in there, with interest rates so high as to break fresh ground in prime-number theory.

Above all, perhaps, at least the Tories are sufficiently non-Sunday school

to stand half a chance of dealing with the bogus, piratical "global market", now accepted as the given order of things. Cliff Richard and his mates on the Labour side haven't a clue. They really believe "world-class companies" (ruthless predators) prefer an educated, motivated workforce to a nice low wage bill.

When huge companies whore from country to country demanding bribes and sweeteners (sorry, "location packages") to set up factories, they know the incentives they demand will come from, *inter alia*, the education budget. Do they care?

Three years ago, that great stakeholding com-

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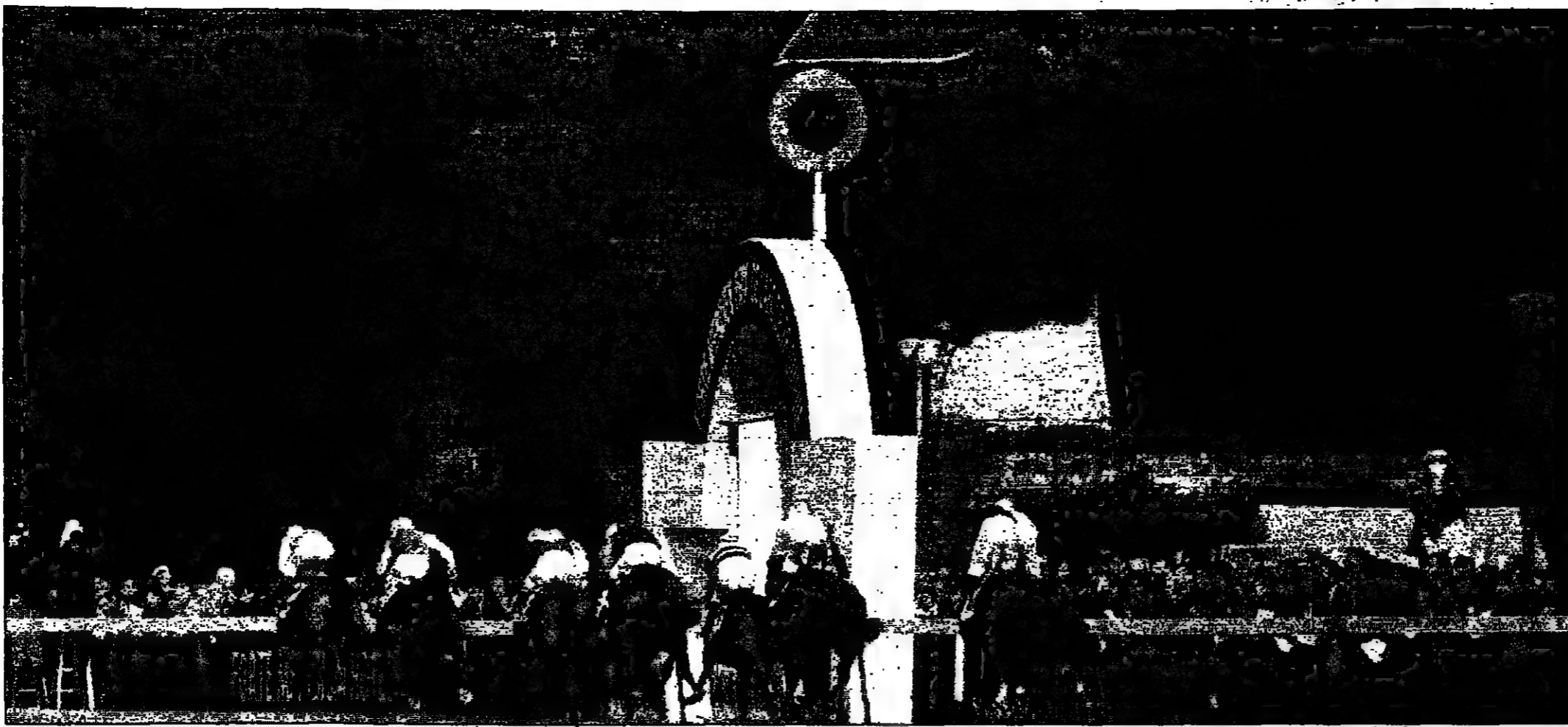
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Emily Sheffield



Frankie's back... Dettori gains a narrow win on Ryaflan (far left) in the Prix Marcel Boussac at Longchamp yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: TOM JENNINGS

Reid rides off into the Sunset after Arc fall

Three cheers for Britain on Arc de Triomphe day as Alhaarth finally comes good. Graham Rook reports from Longchamp

JOHN REID literally picked himself up from the floor to win the Sunset & Vine Prix de l'Opera on Donna Viola at Longchamp yesterday. Giving fallen heavily from Polaris Flight in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe 45 minutes earlier, Reid was stretched off the course, but he declared himself fit on his return to the weighing room and gave Donna Viola a tremendous ride to snatch an unlikely victory in the final strides.

man-trained La Blue would win for Cash Assussen. But weaving his way through a tightly-packed field, Reid produced his filly in the final 50 yards to land a dramatic success, and one of the most important in the career of Chris Wall, who trains 82 horses at Newmarket.

"It's a big thrill for a small owner and a small stable," said Wall. "She worked very well last weekend, so I came here with some confidence, although this was a big step up. She was boxed in with nowhere to go up the straight, but it might have suited her."

again this year," added Wall. The victory was a welcome change of luck for Reid, who had been disqualified after winning the Prix de Condé on Monza the previous afternoon, when he was given a four-day suspension.

streamlined, Eddyry bounding in rhythm to his mount's stride. Yashmak, who led early in the straight, was revolutionarily challenged by Ryaflan, and in the final 50 metres Dettori's mount inched in front to beat her rival by a head, with Family Tradition two and a half lengths back in third.

"Ryaflan will be trained for the Guineas," Gosden confirmed. "But she has plenty of stamina in her pedigree and we'll have to consider the Oaks."

beat Shaanxi, his only serious challenger in the closing stages, by a length and a half. The overseas challengers failed in the Prix de l'Abbaye for the first time in 19 years, but the race did not go as expected to the 2-5 favourite, Annaba.

Glover to the fore in Cambridgeshire again

Jeremy Glover may be a quiet, unassuming man, but he has an unshakable address near Work-sop, but few will doubt his perspicacity after he sent out Clifton Fox to win a fourth Toté Cambridgeshire at Newmarket on Saturday. He is normally reckoned to be one of the toughest handicaps of the season.

the fact that Glover, a former jump jockey, has only saddled five runners in the race. Clifton Fox led the hounds a merry dance here and never looked in danger of defeat after hitting the front a furlong and a half out, running on strongly to beat Missile.

not, of course, make Duffield any the worse as a rider and it was just a question of waiting for the right horse. Frankle Dettori was in double form at Longchamp on Saturday, winning on Annaba and Flemensfirth, and it would surely have been a treble if Moonax had not

chucked away the Prix du Cadran after ducking violently to his left on spotting the exit in the rails. Moonax is too clever for his own good, but at least he did not disgrace himself, as he did last year, by trying to make a meal of one of his rivals.

CIGAR, America's star Cracehorse, suffered a shock defeat when failing to peg back the champion three-year-old Skip Away, who is trained by former FBI agent Sony Bine, in Saturday's Jockey Club Gold Cup at Belmont Park, New York.

Breeders' Cup Classic at Woodbine, Toronto, on October 26. Jerry Bailey, Cigar's trainer, said: "I must be honest, I couldn't beat it started in at the half-mile pole but from a furlong out I couldn't make up any ground on Skip Away. I tip my hat to the winner."

Beaten at odds-on in the race last season, Wizard King was ridden by George Duffield to a length and a half behind the Black Tom-kiss-trained Cool Edge. Sound Man, sent off at 4-1 on, cruised home by 20 lengths under Richard Dunwoody in the Croom House Stud Chase.

Pontefract runners and riders with form guide

Table with 2 columns: Race details (time, distance, conditions) and runner/rider information (horse name, jockey, odds, previous performance).

Table with 2 columns: Race details and runner/rider information for various races.

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Annus makes grade in Japan

Non-Cox

CLASSIC Cliche was a bitter disappointment in yesterday's Arc, but Codelapin's run of glory continued in Tokyo on Saturday when Annus Mirabilis captured the 2889,625 Mainichi Okan under Darryll Holland.

The four-year-old, a 92-10 shot, was held up in third behind Toyo Lyphard before going on to lead the nine-furlong event by a length and a half.

Annus Mirabilis has been a regular in European pattern races since he finished 12 lengths second to the now-retired Celtic Swing in the Racing Post Trophy at Doncaster two years ago.

Holland, who has been riding on a three-month contract in Japan since August and was gaining his first win from 17 mounts, said: "I'm ridden this horse about a year ago but I feel he has matured a great deal since then."

The Grade Two Mainichi Okan was opened to international competition for the first time this year and is the seventh Japanese race in which foreign runners are allowed.

British raiders carried all before them in Italy over the weekend, winning all the four races they contested at San Siro, Milan.

Mistle Cat, trained by Sean Woods, led all the way to beat Mark Johnston's Gothenberg by two lengths in the open-mile Premio Vittorio di Capua yesterday.

"He loved the mud," said Mistle Cat's jockey Richard Hughes. "There were listed race wins for Snow Princess and Hello, trained by John Dunlop, but she was not surprised to have saddled the first two home, but she readily admitted that she had anticipated a different outcome."

Sir Mark Prescott's Wizard King won for the third time in Ireland in the last year, justifying favouritism in the Coolmore Stud Home of Champions Concorde Stakes at Tipperary yesterday.

Beaten at odds-on in the race last season, Wizard King was ridden by George Duffield to a length and a half behind the Black Tom-kiss-trained Cool Edge.

Sound Man, sent off at 4-1 on, cruised home by 20 lengths under Richard Dunwoody in the Croom House Stud Chase.

Socialist's first Sunday jumps meeting was a resounding success yesterday when Kelso pulled in a crowd estimated by officials to be "well in excess of 7,000."

Fontwell (N.H.)

Table with 2 columns: Race details (time, distance, conditions) and runner/rider information (horse name, jockey, odds, previous performance).

Table with 2 columns: Race details and runner/rider information for various races.

Handwritten signature or mark at the bottom of the page.

SOCCER: WORLD CUP QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT

Italy's striking pointer to Hoddle

Commentary David Lacey

FOR England and Glenn Hoddle the game is about for Arrigo Sacchi, Italy's coach, the same was very nearly up in Kishinev on Saturday as his latest confused team defeated Moldova 3-1 in a World Cup qualifier with rather less conviction than Hoddle's side had shown in winning 3-0 in the Republican Stadium five weeks earlier.

recalling Ferdinand to play alongside Shearer as well as including Le Tissier or Marson, should note the lessons that one would not have thought Italy, of all teams, needed to learn.

Before Saturday's match serious misgivings had been expressed about Sacchi's decision to face Moldova with three strikers — Chiesa, Casiraghi and Ravanelli — and although Ravanelli put Italy ahead after eight minutes with a swinging free-kick the doubts soon proved to be justified.

Three minutes later Ferrarini failed to clear a long high ball from Eparant, leaving Curtiani to bring the scores level. There they stayed for the best part of the next hour

as Italy's narrow-fronted attack and a midfield badly missing Albertini failed to get to grips with a Moldova team inspired by thoughts of a famous victory... well, a famous draw anyway.

England had their scares in Kishinev but won comfortably enough because Ince's strength in midfield was complemented by the consistent width of the attack and the quality of centres supplied by Barmby and Gary Neville. Until Di Livio replaced Chiesa at half-time Italy exploited Moldova's chronic weaknesses in the air only at free-kicks and corners.

Eventually Di Livio's cross from the right found Ravanelli dragging Secu out of position and Casiraghi headed the

Italians back in front after neither Testimianu nor Romanenco, the erratic Moldova goalkeeper, had managed to stop the ball reaching him. Ravanelli scored a late third from the penalty spot.

For the moment the significance of the result, as it affects Group Two of the qualifying competition, is minimal. England lead the group from Italy on the strength of Curtiani's goal, and that is unlikely to be much of an advantage should Hoddle's team finish second.

Only the best runners-up from the nine European groups will go straight into the 1998 tournament in France. The remaining eight will play off, home and away, for four places. And because

there are five groups of five nations and four of six, not all results will count when it comes to deciding who goes through automatically.

In the last European Championship only results against the teams finishing first, third and fourth in each qualifying group were taken into account. A similar device in the World Cup, and in the likely event of Moldova coming last in Group Two England's victory might be significant only if they finish top.

Either way Hoddle knows that his best chance of forcing Italy into second place will come when Sacchi's team visit Wembley in February. That always assumes Sacchi will still be in charge. He is not out of the wood yet and

needs an emphatic win against Georgia in Perugia on Wednesday.

England, meanwhile, will be keen to discover whether the carry-over from Euro 96, on and off the field, will inspire Hoddle's team against an out-of-sorts Poland side. From an English point of view the quarrel between Andrzej Juskowiak, Poland's leading scorer, and the coach Antoni Piechniczek is perfectly timed.

The row springs from Piechniczek's decision to substitute Juskowiak at half-time when Poland lost 2-0 to Russia in a friendly in June. Juskowiak complained that he had not interrupted his holidays merely to play 45 minutes. As a result he has



Tough going... Ravanelli (left) battles it out with Secu

been dropped from the squad and unless there is a last-minute reconciliation he will not be at Wembley. Les Ferdinand is unlikely to flounce out if Hoddle again leaves him on the bench, which must be a possibility. The form shown by Barmby and Beckham in Kishinev argues against either being left out to accommodate Shearer's Newcastle partner, and if Hoddle decides to recall

McManaman, who missed Moldova with a back injury, he is more likely to do so at the expense of Hinchecliffe. Ferdinand and Shearer may be doing a prolific partnership for Newcastle but at international level the idea that strikers can always hunt in pairs, let alone triples, is a myth — even if Ferdinand and Wright did once score five between them against San Marino.



On the break... Jordi Cruyff wriggles his way clear of Wales's Andrew Melville as Holland take command

Group Seven: Wales 1, Holland 3

When a near miss is as good as a mile

Martin Thorpe in Cardiff on an eventual Dutch win that opened up a chasm in class

FOOTBALL can be a deceptive game. Had Mark Hughes converted a six-yard chance to put Wales 2-0 ahead after an hour on Saturday night, Sunday morning's story might well have been one of Welsh sweet glory triumphing over Dutch style.

Hughes missed, the Dutch eventually did not, and so victory was not able to mask a multitude of sins. "I have to ask," said the manager Bobby Gould yesterday, "do the Wales players know the game as well as the Dutch players? And I would have to say we're 20 years behind them. It comes down to ball retention, passing, making angles off the ball and the players just understanding what they're trying to do. Unless we get some answers we're not going to France."

One could be cynical and say his criticism was designed to deflect blame from himself, were it not for the fact that anyone who saw Wales's performance knows he is right.

Holland dominated the match with a characteristically easy invention and effortless technique that undermined all talk of injuries and turmoil. And the Welsh, despite a fighting spirit that kept the Dutch goalless for 72 minutes, looked like a Ford Escort trying to win a Grand Prix.

Gould blames the problem on a long-term lack of investment in Welsh coaching, plus the players' acceptance of second best. "I told them they don't set their standards high enough," he said. "I told them

to go back to their clubs and say to their coaches, 'I have a problem', and to work on their game instead of jumping in the car with their mates after training and disappearing."

It will take some coach to sort out the problem in time for World Cup qualification. But a glance next to the players' names on the team-sheet reveals another reason for the class divide: Ajax, Real Madrid and Internazionale on one side, Huddersfield Town, Wrexham and Bristol Rovers on the other.

Such inexperience meant, for instance, that when Wales did get the ball, few players knew how to keep it, even if it was just to give a breather to a beleaguered defence. The outlet offered by the class of the suspended Ryan Giggs was badly missed, and as Gould has fallen out with Ian Rush perhaps the manager would have got better ball retention by picking seasoned players such as David Phillips and Vinnie Jones. "That is your opinion," was Gould's reply.

The problem was, however, that the Wales players' endless chase of the ball eventually left the midfield too tired to support the front two. So the ball came back towards Southall's goal with even more frequency.

His response was to produce one of the truly great goalkeeping displays and a tonic for all 38-year-olds as he pulled off about eight goal-denying saves ranging from the good to the greatest, a flying arch backwards to claw out Cocu's

top-corner-bound header. Wales were still 1-0 ahead at that point, courtesy of Dean Saunders on 17 minutes. The goal should have been disallowed for offside but Holland recovered from the blow, resumed their luxurious parade of slick passes and shrewd movement and did everything but score.

That they finally broke through was down to an inspired substitution, the arrival of Celtic's Pierre van Hoooydonk.

Two touches after coming on he poked home from point-blank range. Then, four minutes later, the impressive Seedorf left Bowen for dead down the right and as he lined up a perfect cross, Van Hoooydonk moved away classically from the goal and his marker Melville before thundering back in to meet the ball unstopably with his head. It was the perfect riposte to being dropped by Tommy Burns in a clash over money.

Four minutes later and the game was over. Cocu crossed from the left and Ronald de Boer dived in with a header.

Wales, worryingly, can expect more of the same in Holland next month when their three-point lead in Group Seven may well vanish. Their task will be hindered by the absence through suspension of Hughes, one of the best players at keeping the ball, though Giggs returns after his ban. All they need now are nine more in his class.

WALLES: Scotland (Gordon, Beckmann, Charlton), Malville (Bunsterland), Bowen (West Ham), Spens (Manchester City), Seedorf (Celtic), Ferdinand (Sheff Wed, Legg, Birmingham, 60min), Herve (Birmingham), Greenwood (Preston), Jovovic (Aston Villa), Huddersfield, 60, Seedorf (Nottingham Forest), Hughes (Chelsea), VAN HOOYDONK: Van der Sar (Ajax), Van Hoooydonk, 60, F de Boer, Van der Boer, Wigger, Jans, Seedorf, Cocu, Seedorf (Chelsea), 60, F de Boer (Van Hoooydonk, 60). Reference: A Lopez: Neco (Spain).

Milosevic opens the floodgates and Faroes sink without trace

ASTON Villa's Savo Milosevic scored a first-half hat-trick as Yugoslavia stroled to an 8-1 away win over the Faroe Islands in Group Six yesterday.

Yugoslavia, who overcame rain-soaked conditions and also had a goal disallowed, maintained their 100-per-cent record after three games and top the group whereas Allan Simonsen's Faroe Islands team have lost all four of theirs. Spain travel to the Czech Republic on Wednesday in the same group.

Group Four: Latvia 0, Scotland 2

Scots make do and mend

Patrick Glenn in Riga on Craig Brown's options for Wednesday's game in Estonia

THE starfish has an extraordinary talent for losing important parts of its body and growing effective replacements. In time it could also become a role model for the Scotland squad.

Adaptability rather than outstanding ability was at the core of the success achieved by the players Craig Brown took to Estonia last night in readiness for the second part of an important double. But the captain Gary McAllister and his fellow midfielder Stuart McCall are unavailable for Wednesday's match in Tallinn, and it will again be time to come up with effective replacements.

McAllister received a yellow card during the 2-0 win in Latvia — he was also cautioned during the 0-0 draw with Austria in Vienna last month — and is automatically suspended. McCall was confined to barracks for Saturday's second half with a hamstring injury.

Whatever the mishaps — Brown had already lost four forwards and one defender from his original squad — the Scots seem able to cope. Indeed, the victory would have been even more emphatic but for a fine performance from the goalkeeper Karavayev and assorted miscues in front of goal.

The goals, scored by Collins and Jackson either side of the interval, were outstanding. The Monaco midfielder Collins was the most influential player on the field; he will take over the captaincy for the first time on Wednesday.

how we go about things. The manager works very hard on the togetherness aspect and, of course, he is always well armed with information on the opposition.

"He is very accurate, too, and players coming into the group tend to be very well prepared, even in a very short time, for what lies ahead."

Estonia lie immediately ahead, but that satisfactory night's work in Riga suggests that Brown is unlikely to suffer anxiety attacks over the prospect.

With Sweden and Austria, Scotland's most serious rivals in Group Four, meeting in Stockholm on the same evening, victory in Tallinn would enhance the Scots' prospects of qualifying for France 1998.

Brown's crop does not contain many plums, but the secret of their relative success may reside in the fact that the players are, generally speaking, of similar quality. It gives them resilience, with replacements often as effective as the original choices.

McAllister, however, is an exception. Finding an adequate deputy for one of the two most accomplished players in the squad — Collins is the other — may be troublesome. Brown will compensate by tinkering with his formation.

"The way the Estonians play, with only one striker, we don't need three at the back," he said yesterday. "We could play a 2-5-3 attacking formation. If it's any guide, you can take it we were very pleased with Jackie McNamara when he came off the bench against Latvia."

The young full-back, then, will win his second cap at right-back with Craig Burley moving forward to midfield and Scott Gemmill being pressed into the McAllister role.

Collins agreed that having one level of quality in the squad helped their consistency, but insisted that there was another reason. "Craig's preparations are top class," he said. "It's why a new man coming in seems to know exactly what is required and

Group Nine: Northern Ireland 1, Armenia 1

Hamilton doubt over next stop

Michael Walker on an outbreak of rumour in Belfast

SOMEONE much wiser than your average football manager once said: "It is hard to believe a man is telling the truth when you know you would lie if you were in his place."

Without wishing to imply that Hamilton is even remotely related to the honourable member for Tattin the quotation came to mind on Saturday afternoon as the Northern Ireland manager met the media at Windsor Park.

After his brief analysis of a disappointing draw the hungry press got on to the nitty gritty — Manchester City. A flurry of speculation had preceded this World Cup qualifying match and it all concerned Hamilton's relationship with Maine Road: had he been approached?

His response was similar to the one he had given before kick-off. "I just take it as a great compliment." Beyond that, he said, he would not go, but did, "this job is not for ever, and I would always like to go back into club management."

Hamilton then gave what amounted to a verbal CV of his time in charge of Northern Ireland: Joint-second finish in a European Championship group, a "great" result against Germany before the summer and the development of a nucleus of promising young players. "And I've loved it," he added, in the past tense. Then he left and today will

be on an aircraft bound for Frankfurt. There he links with the Germany team bound for Erevan to face Armenia on Wednesday night. Unless, of course, Franny calls. That is not entirely unrealistic. Lee badly needs someone with enthusiasm. Hamilton's greatest asset. Many managers might regard the Maine Road job as dead end, but not Hamilton.

In every possible way Windsor Park is smaller than Maine Road, particularly after the two latest underwhelming Irish performances. August's defeat by Ukraine was at least put into perspective by Portugal's loss in Kiev on Saturday and this tepid draw may turn hotter after a few teams have visited Armenia.

And that is the problem for Hamilton and any future Northern Ireland manager, the country with the smallest population in the group is finally becoming the weakest team. The Armenian coach recognises this, saying: "We came here for the victory and lost two important points."

A Frenchman called Eric had given the Armenians a sight of all three with a goal after seven minutes which was well constructed and well taken. Assoudouryan of Guingamp, making his debut, only qualifies for Armenia because of the grandmother ruling. Lennon, whose mistake led to the Armenian goal, atoned on the half-hour with a fluky volley that gives the Irish one point out of six. The Germans are next, although Hamilton would have noted that Manchester City were due at QPR on Saturday.

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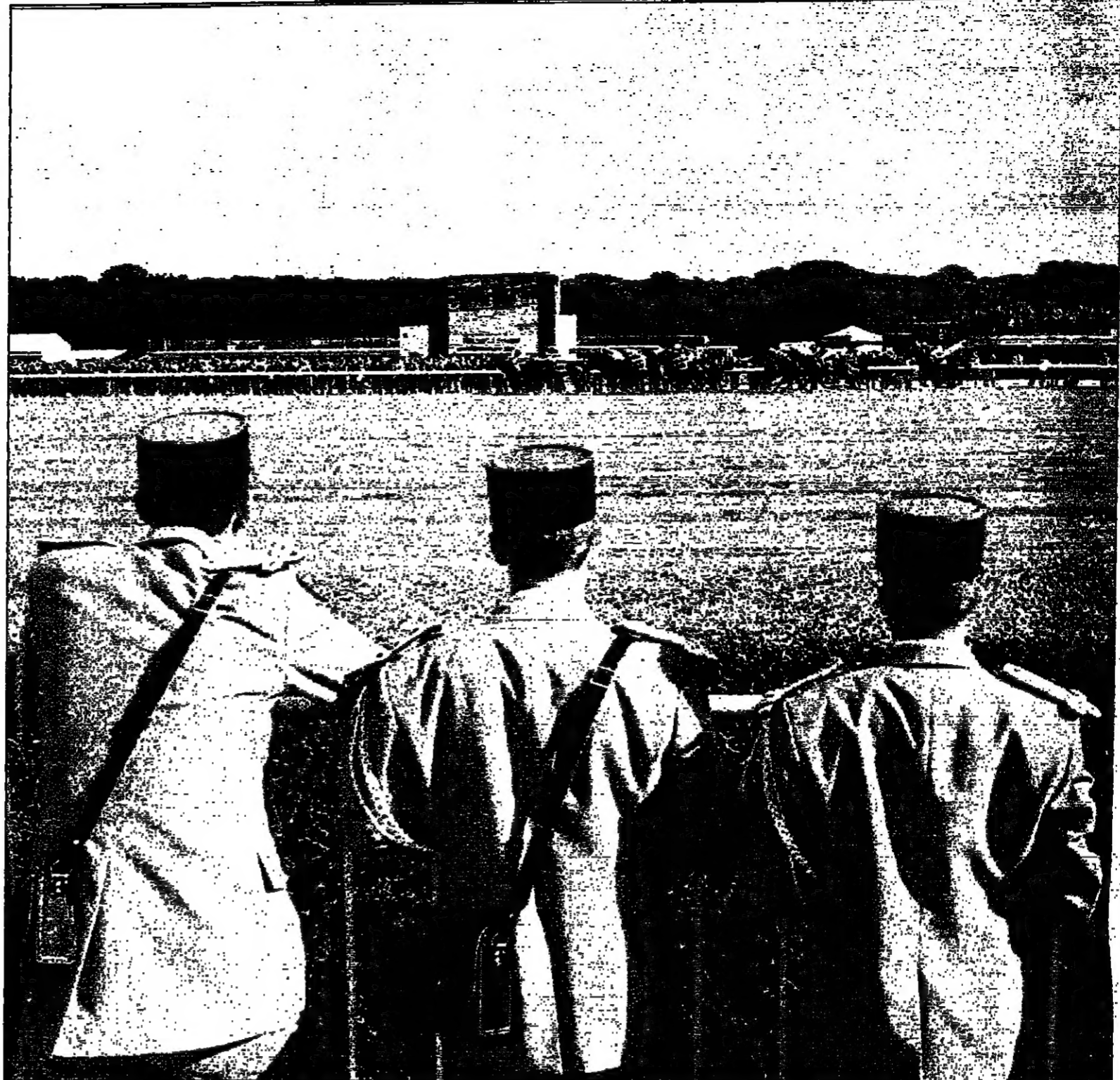
Soccer
Italy's
problems
show Hoddle
the way

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SportExtra

THE BIG-RACE PARISIAN CROWD IS TREATED TO AN AWESOME DISPLAY OF HORSE POWER



French triumphant... Olivier Peslier acknowledges the cheers of the Longchamp crowd after his awesome victory on Helissio. Members of the Army Band were among the spectators who witnessed his winning ride. PHOTOGRAPHS: TOM JENKINS

Chris Hawkins reports from Longchamp where a colt pulverised Europe's finest horses in the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe

Helissio makes hacks of the best

IT WAS a case of Helissio first, the rest nowhere at Longchamp yesterday as the French-trained three-year-old colt ran out one of the easiest winners of the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe since Sea Bird in 1985. There are few finer sights in racing than a free-moving front runner switching into overdrive, and that was exactly what Helissio served up to the Parisian crowd when he lengthened his awesome stride to put the race beyond doubt as soon as he swung for home. His emphatic victory earned his connections \$527,000 in prize-money alone. Pilsudski was five lengths away in second place, narrowly holding the late run of Oscar Schindler, but as the runner-up's English trainer Michael Stoute said: "As soon as the winner quickened we had no chance. Helissio is just a machine."

No one was arguing with that summing-up nor with Olivier Peslier, the winning jockey, when he climbed the 1 1/2-mile race in his pocket fully seven furlongs out. "I don't know how you say this in English but in France we say 'ooh la la la la'," said Peslier. "This was the best of the best."

Peslier's English may be somewhat eccentric but the 25-year-old French champion-elect is a natural horseman and, judging by the way he rode this winner, has a

superb "pair of hands". Helissio pulled like a train when beaten for the first and only time, in the French Derby, with Dominic Boeuf in the saddle. But as soon as Peslier got on him he became a different animal altogether. Peslier can simply drop his hands on the withers and the colt switches off, as he showed here by racing in such a free but totally relaxed manner. As for Helissio, his power comes from a long, strong body which gives him a tremendous presence. Among a good-looking field

'Seldom has a field of top-class horses been made to look so slow as by Helissio in full cry'

Among a good-looking field yesterday he was easily the pick of the paddock. This was a first Arc win for his trainer, Elie Lellouche, whose beefy stature belies his original career as a jockey, and for his Spanish owner Enrique Sarasola, who paid only \$50,000 francs (around \$45,000) for Helissio as a yearling.

The Japanese made an offer for him of \$8 million (£5.5 million) before this race but Sarasola turned them down. The men with the yen may dramatically revise their bid soon, as Helissio's next race

could be the Japan Cup in Tokyo. Lellouche ruled out a trip to Toronto for the Breeders' Cup in three weeks' time, believing that will come too soon, although Helissio hardly seemed to break sweat here. Sarasola, a businessman who owns Madrid racecourse, never has more than two horses in training in France and, with his luck, hardly needs any more; Verte Amande, his previous Arc runner, finished third in 1992. Helissio was bred by Chrissy O'Reilly, wife of the

Heinz millionaire Tony, but is the only produce of the dam Helice, who was subsequently barren and sold in some disgrace to Saudi Arabia.

If there was an unfortunate horse in the race it was Oscar Schindler, ridden by Cash Asmussen, who was second-last turning into the straight when Peslier said "Allez". From that position he had no chance but he made up a huge amount of ground in the final two furlongs. The Melbourne Cup, over two miles in early November, must now be a big temptation for Kevin

Prendergast, his trainer. Oscar Schindler has set 13lb in the big Australian race and must be regarded as very well handicapped. Coral immediately offered him at 8-1 for the race, William Hill going a more conservative 6-1.

There were a number of disappointing efforts yesterday, notably from Swain, who ran fourth but some way below his earlier form when he had finished within a length of Helissio at Saint-Cloud. Festive was 10th and never threatened to get in a blow and Zagreb, whose owner Allen Paulson had piloted his own jet across the Atlantic to see the race, faded to finish 13th after being close enough on the home turn. His jockey Mick Kinane said that the Irish Derby winner "blew up" and that he was not hard on the colt once it became clear his chance had gone.

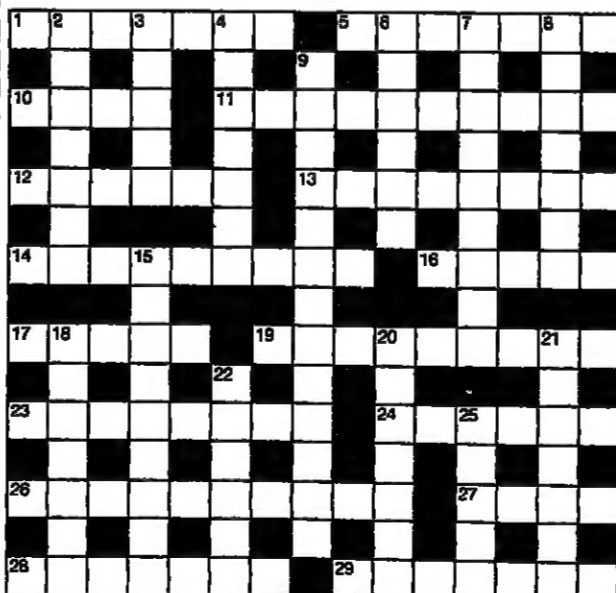
Frankie Dettori came down to earth when finishing last on Classic Cliche, who ran too badly to be true. He finished tailed off and Dettori described his running as "very flat".

The sad aspect of the contest was that Polaris Flight broke his off-fore leg and had to be destroyed. But the abiding memory of the race will be of Helissio in full cry. Seldom has a field of top-class horses been made to look so slow.

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Guardian Crossword No 20,777

Set by Crispa



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This week's winners of a Collins English Dictionary are Mrs G Speelman of Haslegrave, North Yorkshire, Mr A Woodger of London SE4, G N Furnival of Seaford, East Sussex, Mike Breslin of Box Cornham, Wiltshire, and K S Kiseack of Oranien, Isle of Man.

- 24 Stuck? Then call our solutions line on 0891 338 238. Calls cost 45p per min, cheap rate, 50p per min at all other times. Service supplied by AT&T.
- 24 Being in rags, the beggar is hardly flashy (5)
- 26 Possibly sets about a creditor, but certainly not the bestest (10)
- 27 Directions on producing gas (4)
- 28 Perfume that can cause an adverse reaction? (7)
- 29 Well-organised assistant (7)

Y B A D A T F O
O U T A N D O U T H A I K O
Y A E U O O N N A
B A R C H O N C O U S I Y
L I S T I G E
E A I L D I S H A S H A
A O O Z N
I C O O L E I O U L E
G J
G O P P H E A D O A T
H A T E A R K E
A B U T T E R D I D O U
L P A O O T U A
G L E A R G L E W A T E
E R T V T G S

- Across
- 1 A flower opening wide in the end (7)
 - 3 The dejection of a male is awful to see (7)
 - 10 Some role! (4)
 - 11 Occasional police raid may be ordered (10)
 - 12 Boxes with a key are in short supply (6)

- 13 Barely moved — or moved very fast (8)
- 14 American women's team making a strong attack (8)
- 16 An all-round measure (5)
- 17 Work in Greek island prisons (5)
- 19 Walk, and please get moving! (9)
- 23 Imposing corporal punishment (6)

- Down
- 2 Hustle the slipshod operator (7)
 - 3 Total issue (5)
 - 4 A note newsmen hold back (7)
 - 6 A plank craftily positioned (6)
 - 7 Adapt to it again and there'll be trouble (9)
 - 8 The oldest way to keep accounts (7)
 - 9 He'll arrange personal cover in quite original fashion (5-6)

- 15 Pop back in place repaired device (9)
- 16 A flighty creature gets to marry in a foreign port (7)
- 20 Brighter, but more frivolous (7)
- 21 Loot might be piled so (7)
- 22 Various people going down (6)
- 25 Row involving grazing for cattle (5)

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